

Lee officials say override loss boosts need for administrator

By Gerald O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — In the aftermath of this town's rejection of a tax-limit override and its acceptance of an administrator form of government, you might think one of the first sacrifices to fiscal restraint would be the salary for the town's first administrator.

You might, but you would be wrong.

If an administrator is needed more at one time than another, now is that time, suggested Robert B. Trask, chairman of the town's Finance Committee.

It is time, he said, to search out new sources of revenue, like grants in aid, that would help the town pay for necessary expenditures but wouldn't add to property taxes in a difficult financial period.

It is also time, he continued, for the town to implement new operating efficiencies.

A professional administrator would be the person to do both jobs, he said.

"As far as I'm concerned, now is the time an administrator is needed," said Selectman Diane P. Roosa, who will be chairman of the Selectmen for the next six months.

Their comments were sought after voters at Lee's town election Monday accepted, by a close 481-467 vote, the legislation that establishes a selectmen-administrator form of government for the first time. The acceptance was the final act in what has been a three-year quest for a form of government that would bring the town full-time professional administration but retain the elements of town-meeting democracy.

It makes Lee the fifth town in Berkshire County to choose to install a full-time administrator.

Trask's, Roosa's and others' comments were also sought because the voters, by a decisive 729-225 margin, rejected an over-

ride proposal that would have allowed the town to levy up to \$255,000 more in property taxes than the tax-limiting law, Proposition 2½, currently permits.

Trask said he was not surprised at either vote. In fact, he expected them, he said.

But as a result, he continued, town officials must get to work without delay to decide where to cut the town's just-approved \$8.56 million budget that is some \$226,000 over the limit set by the taxing law.

He said he opposes waiting past the end of the fiscal year, June 30, to recommend the needed budget cutbacks and schedule the needed special town meeting to act on them. The Finance Committee will meet soon to discuss the options, he said.

But some other town officials feel it would be better to wait until local-aid allotments from the commonwealth are firm.

"If anyone asks me, I'm going to recommend we wait until we get the cherry sheet," said Patricia D. Carlino, newly elected town clerk and treasurer. "All we have now are estimates."

"Instinctively, I feel we ought to wait," said Martin H. Deely, a former two-term selectman who was elected to the Board of Se-

lectmen again on Monday. He said the town "could be looking at the loss of another \$250,000 in local aid if the scuttlebutt we hear from the state is true" and it would "be a shame to cut the budget once and then have to come back and do it twice because we found ourselves another \$100,000 short."

Roosa said she, too, leans toward waiting. "We should know what we've got before we call a meeting," she said.

Outgoing Selectman William D. Bean suggested the town might have to consider employee furloughs, as the state is requiring of many of its workers.

"I'm sure not all town employees slept comfortably last night," said Deely, referring to the night after the defeat of the override. "They're people, not numbers, and they have families and mortgages."

The vote, said Trask, amounted to voters saying they cannot afford to pay more taxes. "Unemployment in Lee is very high," he said, "and I think a lot of them were watching out for their neighbors."

In all, 1,245 of the town's 3,059 registered voters, or 40.7 percent, cast ballots Monday.

Administrator Yes, Funding No

LEE — Voters at the annual election Monday approved legislation creating a full-time town administrator, 481-467.

But they refused an override of the tax levy limits of Proposition 21/2 which would have funded such a position, 225-729.

The override's failure means officials may have to chop \$226,000 off of spending before seeking another vote. There will also have to be another town meeting to adopt a revised budget.

Martin H. Deely was elected Selectman to succeed William Bean. He garnered 757 votes to Gordon D. Bailey's 432.

Patricia D. Carlino, longtime assistant town clerk and assistant treasurer, was elected to those two positions with 873 (clerk) and 839 (treasurer) votes, respectively. She outpolled Timothy O. Taylor, who had 326 and 356 votes, respectively, for the positions.

Judith L. Olds and David K. Chivers were elected to the school committee; William F. Derrick and Edward F. Murray were elected assessors; and Aldo Pascucci was elected to the Planning Board over incumbent Sallie Kate Kish, 708-356. Frank V. McCarthy was elected to the Housing Authority over Rosemary Bush Hughes and Karen Norton was elected to the Board of Health.

Courier 5.16.91

Advocate 5.15.91

Lee considers layoffs as override fails

Voters reject request by 3-1 margin;

Deely elected S'man, Roosa is chair

Lee town officials say they will have to either lay off town employees or severely reduce work hours as a result of Monday's town vote overwhelmingly rejecting a \$255,000 override of Proposition 2 1/2.

Residents voted 729-225 against raising the town levy limit. "It's a pretty strong message," says Selectman Martin Deely, who favored the override, but won the race for selectman against Gordon Bailey by a 757-432 vote.

Selectmen say they will meet with the finance committee to consider where cuts should be made in the \$8.5 million budget, which had been approved four days earlier at the annual Town Meeting.

In approving the budget, town representatives acknowledged the need to trim spending, but they were reluctant to make cuts

until after the results of the override vote. Town officials will make their recommendations to the Town Meeting for approval.

"The town reps had the opportunity to make the cuts and they didn't, so we will have to do it for them," says Selectman Joseph F. DuPont. "It's not going to be fun. There will have to be some very drastic cuts."

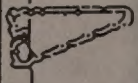
"It could be employees," says Selectmen's Chairman Diane Roosa.

Roosa was elected chairman of the board for the first six months of the year with DuPont returning as chairman for the second half of the year. DuPont, who has been chairman for the last year, says he needs a break and Roosa says the board needs a change in leadership. Traditionally, however, the third-year selectman acts as chairman. To restore that tradition, the board voted to have DuPont serve as chairman for the last six months.

While DuPont and Roosa say that they may consider cutting or

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THE BERKSHIRE COURIER, Thursday, May 16, 1991



Town Meeting: Lee

Administrator Supported

LEE -- Representatives at the annual meeting last week gave further endorsement of the administrator form of government by approving \$49,500 for a salary and recruitment expenses. Pending a voter override of the tax levy limits of Proposition 21/2, an administrator could be hired by July 1.

The fiscal 1991-92 budget came in at \$8.5 million. Some cuts were made on the meeting floor, so voters Monday had to give a ye or nay signal to a \$226,000 override.

Of the town's budget, some 44.3 million is for schools; \$867,000 for public works. Town meeting refused to adopt a non-partisan nominating caucus and failed to

approve a 13,000 road roller purchase.

Zoning bylaws were amended to set a \$300 fine for violations having to do with off-street parking requirements. Construction of a \$2,000 skating rink was voted down.

A \$15,395 town hall secretarial position was eliminated, in anticipation of a replacement position opening as assistant town clerk and treasurer, though there was considerable discussion and uncertainty on the issue.

On Dean's List

LEE -- Tracie Burdick, a major in clothing and textiles at Framingham State College, is on the dean's list for the recent semester.

Lee override means job cuts

Continued from page 1

postponing some capital expenses, such as a new police cruiser, the preservation of town records and painting the firehouse, such reductions will be too small to balance the budget.

DuPont says officials will see whether any positions can be cut and will examine closing town offices during some working days.

One position that the selectmen say they will recommend not cutting is the town administrator. Voters approved a referendum question establishing a selectmen-administrator form of government by a 481-467 vote. At the Town Meeting, representatives unanimously approved funding the position.

"The voters have spoken on that," DuPont says. Roosa adds, however, that the board may decide to trim this year's budgeted \$49,000 salary because the position will remain vacant for several months.

Election results

A total of 1,245 voters -- or about 40 percent of the registered voters -- took part in Monday's election.

Voters overwhelmingly favored Patricia D. Carlino over Timothy Taylor for a three-year term as town clerk (873-326) and town treasurer (839-356).

Aldo V. Pascucci succeeded in ousting incumbent Sallie Kate Kish from the Planning Board by a 708-356 vote. Frank V. McCarthy edged Rosemary B. Hughes for a five-year term on the Housing Authority 569-488.

Moderator Joseph M. Toole was the top vote-getter with 981 ballots cast in his favor, and William F. Derrick had the second highest number of votes with 928. In both cases the offices were uncontested. Ironically, Carlino was the third-highest vote-getter even though her position was being contested.

In what may be the biggest surprise of the election but of least importance in the short term, voters approved a non-binding referendum question creating a non-partisan caucus favoring the existing Democratic and Republican caucus system. The vote was 449-406.

At the Town Meeting, representatives voted to pass over the same question based on a motion by Edward Briggs, chairman of the Town Democratic Committee.

DuPont, who suggested placing the question on the Town Meeting warrant and on the election ballot, says the vote indicates that the proposition has more support than town representatives realized.

"They won't be able to pass it over next year," DuPont says.

Lee events hit public cable TV

Page 3 The Advocate May 15, 1991

Under Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski's initiative, the town school department has started regular videotaping and cablecasting of town events.

Transmissions of the school budget hearing, interviews for the Lee Central School principal job and the annual Town Meeting have all been shown in the last few weeks on Channel 11, the public-access television station of Century Berkshire Cable TV.

"I want townspeople to have an opportunity to see what's going on," Zukowski says. "I am very pleased with how it's working. I'm learning that people will watch community-access television."

The series of programs represents the first time public-access television has been used regularly for town events in south county. Both Pittsfield and north county have very active public-access stations. Until recently the four-town Century Cable system in south county has remained relatively unused for town government purposes.

Although Century Cable has been sharply criticized for not promoting a more-active public-access station and for other perceived shortcomings, Zukowski says system manager Phillip Hopkins has been very cooperative.

"Phillip is out of this world," Zukowski says. "Until he tells me to stop doing this, he's going to get at least two things a week from the town and the school. I'm going to keep doing this and any organization that may have a program should let me know."

Zukowski says he had at least 15 people comment to him about the School Committee's performance on television during the interviews and budget hearing. The school's audio-visual technician, Jack LeProvost, has been filming events for the cablecasts.

Among the events Zukowski plans to transmit in the near future are the Lee High School graduation and junior prom, school-committee meetings and the Lee schools' awards assemblies. Zukowski also plans to send LeProvost to the renovated Memorial Hall to give a camera-eye view of the changes in the Main Street building when the



Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski is bringing Lee events into south county homes.

project is completed. Zukowski says he does not plan to film the Selectmen's meetings because of budget constraints.

Selectman candidate Gordon Bailey, however, says he would work toward televising the weekly meetings.

Community Television of Southern Berkshire, a non-profit organization in all four towns served by the cable system (Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and Great Barrington), has been working to become a conduit for cablecasting programs on Channel 11.

After an initial eight days of programming during the winter, however, the group's efforts have been delayed by several procedural obstacles.

Lee Struggles To Cut Funds From Budget

By Gina Gold 5.17.91

LEE—Lee officials will be wielding scissors and axes in the next months as they work feverishly to cut \$226,000 out of the town's \$8.5 million budget. From the funds that remain, they must find \$49,500 to pay for the recruiting and hiring of a town administrator.

This fiscal juggling is the result of the town elections in which Lee voters said "No" cate-

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gorically to a \$255,000 override of tax-limiting Proposition 2 1/2, and a marginal "Yes," to the hiring of a town administrator, a position that promises to bring structure, tight fiscal management and long-term savings to town government. [See Page A7 for election results].

Although representatives at the Annual Town Meeting had already skimmed \$29,000 off of the override figure, the voters demonstrated that they are unwilling pay any extra taxes, even if services would be level with last year. However, a few more than half of the voters could see the advantage spending money for an administrator.

Lee is one of five Berkshire County towns to install a full-time administrator.

To add to the town's fiscal woes, if a projected 20 percent cut in state aid goes into effect, Lee might lose an additional \$250,000. At the town meeting, then Selectman William D. Bean warned the representatives that the state cuts are likely.

Finance Committee chairman Robert B. Trask says that the job of cutting and restructuring the budget must begin immediately. However others, including recently elected officials town clerk and treasurer Patricia D. Carlino and Selectman Martin H. Deely, disagree, saying the finance committee should wait until the figures for state aid are firm. Otherwise, the budget will have to be cut twice. Selectman Diane P. Roosa, who is serving six months as board chairman, concurs.

Most town officials agree that a professional administrator is necessary. Town representatives demonstrated their approval by voting unanimously for the position salary. The reasoning is that a town administrator will bring the experience and expertise to government that the volunteer boards lack. Statistically, administrators are able to obtain grants, a skill sorely needed during the financial crunch.

Lee is one of five Berkshire County towns to install a full-time administrator. Lenox recently voted to hire a town manager, a similar post that carries more authority.

Whatever the final budget, the finance committee, along with all department heads, will have to consider layoffs, furloughs and closing town offices one or more days a week. In the end, the question will go back to the voters, who must approve a new budget.

Lesson In Geography Needed

To The Editor

President George Bush, like our esteemed Gov. William Weld, needs a lesson in geography, history and civics. By his expressed desire not to visit the Berkshires [to campaign for Congressional candidate Stephen Pierce], he displays his lack of compassion for the poor and middle classes who fight our wars and pay the biggest share of taxes in the nation. His chief interest is catering to the wealthy, to big business, industry and their ally, the military, and he fails to realize that the First Congressional District should be taken seriously and not as a thorn in his side.

But we also have a governor whose knowledge of geography also is severely limited who believes Massachusetts ends at Framingham, that what's good for Boston and the Boston area is good for the state. Governor Weld fails to realize that the Berkshires are the head and heart of Massachusetts.

Both President Bush and Gov. Weld, as well as our present State Senator, seem to forget that our educational system is in trouble by cutting funds for state teachers colleges, by threatened cuts for the D.A.R.E. programs which teach our young about drug abuse, by laying off teachers, police, firefighters and other public servants, by the cuts in (programs for) helping the slow learner and physically and emotionally disadvantaged.

Let's remember this on Nov. 3, 1992, and vote Mr. Bush out of office, to vote Mr. Weld our Nov. 5, 1994, and Nov. 3, 1992 vote out our present state senator. It's time for a change.

John R. Copeland

Lee Courier 5.16.91

Kudos to The Record, Reporter Christine Burns

To The Editor:

My highest praise to your newspaper, The Berkshire Record, and to your reporter, Christine Burns, and your photographer for the wonderful article and pictures about Joe's Diner. As a long-time customer I appreciated it, and you scooped every newspaper in the county with a wonderful human-interest story. You have a wonderful paper.

Since March 9, 1955, when Joe Sorrentino, recently discharged from the Army, his wife

and his family, plus others who worked at the grill, behind the counter, and waited on customers provided and still provide excellent food cooked to perfection, served with a smile and a cheery word at prices nearly anyone can afford.

When Joe's Diner was founded Ike was president of the United States, Chris Herter was governor of Massachusetts, John Heselton was our Congressman from the First Congressional District, Silvio Conte was our state senator.

Movie stars, television personalities, sports figures, political leaders, including our former governor and present governor of Massachusetts, have eaten here. Probably the only two who never ate at Joe's were the president and Duncan Hines—probably they couldn't find a stool.

Joe's Diner is an institution, a tradition where the elite and ordinary come to eat and enjoy themselves getting excellent service and to remember a simpler time and unhurried pace.

John R. Copeland
Lee

Berk. Record 5.17.91

Bob C.

Deely Is No Newcomer To Lee's Government

By Gina Gold

LEE—Recently elected Selectman Martin H. Deely is no newcomer to Lee politics. Having served as a selectman from 1971-77, a member of the planning board, a founding member of the housing authority and as a town representative for over 20 years, the Lee native knows just about everything there is to know about the town.

This, he says, is why he ran for office in the midst of what seems an unsolvable fiscal crisis. Deely was voted into office last Monday in a relatively one-sided race against planning board member Gordon Bailey. Voters favored Deely 757 to 432.

Deely, who is president of Lee Lime Corporation, says he returned to the selectman's office because "the problems are serious. I don't know how anybody can solve all the financial problems, but if town government is going to survive in any kind of constructive form, we've all got to do something about it. I decided that I'd been out [of office] long enough."

Much like his predecessor William D. Bean, Deely focuses on the impending cuts in state aid. The last figure he heard was 20 percent, or the loss of \$250,000 to \$300,000. With the voters' defeat of the override of the tax limiting levy Proposition 2 1/2, the added state cuts would tie the hands of town government, he says. Already town officials are making plans for layoffs, furloughs and shortened workweeks.

"How do you divide limited resources without radically curtailing services?" Deely asks. He states flatly that he would "not be embarrassed" to go back to the voters to ask for an override again. "We need to instill the sense of crisis or people are going to see their local government disintegrate."

As for the 12.5 percent unemployment rate in Lee, Deely says local government cannot provide the answers. "There's no way to work on it except for improving the general economy." The town, he says, is facing something of a Catch 22. With the current fiscal crisis, there is not enough money to expand the landfill or increase the town's sewage capacity. This makes it impossible for industry to grow and create jobs in Lee, which, in turn, limits the town's tax base. He says the landfill and sewage questions will have to be handled as long-term issues until the fiscal crisis evens out.

The election also saw the institution of a town administrator position, a change Deely welcomes. He says that it is important that town officials iron out the budget and before a town administrator comes on board. "I think it would be awfully difficult to put someone into this situation until all of the questions have been answered. We should go to the town administrator after all the pushing and shoving is done."

Deely foresees no major disputes with his fellow selectmen. "I'm sure there'll be disagreements, but for the most part, we all know we've got to deal with budgets. Disagreements may be on priorities."

Deely commends the officials who have been serving the town. "Lee's been very lucky, we have a very able group of people. The infrastructure of the town is in good condition; one of the best towns in the area and in the county. Problems have all been dealt with on a regular basis. Hopefully we can survive this period without going too far backwards. It's going to be an interesting time in public office," Deely adds. "People will have to be at their best."

Lee Voters Reject Override Proposal

By Gina Gold

LEE—Lee town voters came out 729 to 225 against an override of the tax levy limiting Proposition 2 1/2, cutting \$226,000 from the \$8.5 million budget that town representatives had approved at the Annual Town Meeting. The clear message from the voters was that they refused to pay more taxes, especially while unemployment tugs at the town's economy.

At the same time, a vote establishing the position of town administrator passed, but only by 14 votes, 481-467. Town meeting representatives unanimously allocated \$49,500 for salary and recruiting for the position, an expense that officials say will create long-term savings in increased administrative and fiscal management.

In the selectmen's race, town representative Martin H. Deely, defeated planning board member Gordon D. Bailey 757 to 432. Deely, a Lee town government veteran who was a selectman from 1971-77, took the seat vacated by selectman William D. Bean.

Patricia D. Carlino was elected town clerk and treasurer in a race against Board of Public Works member Timothy O. Taylor.

Carlino has been assistant town clerk and treasurer for eight years and was appointed as acting town clerk and treasurer

last January when John J. Nagle, who had held the positions for over 20 years, became ill.

Planning Board incumbent Sally Kate Kish was ousted by Aldo V. Pascucci.

In what was a surprise to many officials, voters approved a question that would do away with the Democratic and Republican caucus system.

However the vote will not make any changes, since town representatives passed the question over at the town meeting.

40 percent of the town's 3,059 registered voters turned out for the elections.

Joe's Diner to curtail night hours

■ DINER, from B1

all-night convenience stores and the like. "When we first took over, we were the only ones around. Now there's Convenience Plus," said Sorrentino, pointing across the street to a self-service filling station and store, "and the truck stop. They're open 24 hours and right through the weekend."

He might have said, although he did not, that they are also more expensive than Joe's.

Furthermore, members of the younger Sorrentino generation — sons Michael, Frank and Sam who are taking over management — are not enthused over around-the-clock hours; so, the decision has been made to shut down between midnight and 6 a.m. weekdays. As always, it will continue to be closed from 6:30 p.m. Saturday to 6 a.m. Monday.



Jessie McManmon — Lee High Female Athlete of the Year

Eagle

5.17.91

Still, it's an accomplishment to have maintained the business hours that Joe's and its predecessors did. "We did it for 36 years," said Sorrentino, shaking his head. "And Gatewood and the others before us. Fifty-two years. It was like Joe DiMaggio hitting in 56 consecutive games. The longer you go, the harder it gets to keep it up."

Otherwise, Joe's remains pretty much the same, even to the jukebox playing 1950s' — and sometimes earlier — tunes. About the only sign of revolution comes from Lisa Wetherell, a waitress at Joe's for only a year, who says with a huge smile that when the vendor stops by to change the jukebox tapes, she occasionally gets him to add a few country and western tunes as well.

After years of all-nighters, Joe's Diner curtails hours

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — From the day in 1939 when Edward R. "Happy" Navin first served meals there, the restaurant that everyone knows today as Joe's Diner was open around the clock from Monday morning until Saturday night.

Now, that ambitious — some might say exhausting — schedule has ended.

"The main reason is help," said Joseph Sorrentino, the familiar and gregarious proprietor of Joe's. "You just can't get help anymore, especially anyone that wants to work those real late hours."

Those are the ones between midnight and 6 a.m.

Over the years, said Sorrentino, "there were lots of nights I'd be down here, or my wife, because someone didn't show up. It could really wear you down."

Sorrentino bought the restaurant from Leo A. Gatewood in 1955. It was called Happy's then, but since it has been Joe's, it has gained a reputation and a

distinction that belie its small size — three tables, 14 counter seats — and modest aspect. Truckers in Montana have been seen wearing "God Bless Joe's Diner" T-shirts. People of note, from actors to politicians, have eaten there, shaken hands there, been photographed there.

Sorrentino, his wife, Theresa, and their seven children are understandably impressed by the extent of this recognition, but they also realize times are changing.

It's not the lack of willing late-night help alone.

There is competition these days from

DINER, continued on B3



Joel Ubrizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Joseph Sorrentino dishes up an order of rigatoni and sirloin tips at his diner, a Lee landmark for 52 years.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

More than a half million dollars has been put into the former St. Mary's Academy to convert it into a

handsome inn at Main and Elm streets in Lee. Owner is Joseph M. Toole.

Conversion in Lee

Old school building goes from classes to class

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

5.19.91

Stepping gingerly onto the wine-red tile floor, Joseph M. Toole bent over, peered at one of the tiles near the bathroom vanity and muttered that there were some flecks of dust on it.

"That shouldn't be," he said, as much to himself as to the person he was showing through his new inn. "I'll have to get that taken care of."

Too much attention to detail? Perhaps, for the Chambéry Inn, which is the reincarnation of a 106-year-old school building that Toole bought, moved and began to refurbish two years ago, is eye-catching enough without searching

for dust motes.

But on the other hand, maybe not. Excellence is what Toole says he wants to achieve and, if so, the smallest detail is not too much to overlook.

Certainly some of the guests agree. On one of the bedroom chalkboards is a message that the "attention to detail, comfort, friendliness and love" found at the inn exceeded anything the writer had found elsewhere.

Bedroom chalkboards.

Once they carried the impressions of grammar lessons, arithmetic problems and spelling lists imposed for 72 years on successive generations of school children at the former St. Mary's Academy. Now, they are part of the bedroom-

CHAMBERY, continued on F2



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Accommodations at Chambéry include suites and regular bedrooms. Many of the one-time classrooms still have their

chalkboards, which inspire visitors to leave messages. Joseph M. Toole moved the inn and renovated it.

Old St. Mary's becomes charming inn

■ CHAMBERY, from F1

suite decor in the inn that Toole has named for the city in France where an order of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph was founded in 1812. Five of the order's sisters came to Lee in 1885 to become the first teachers in the vast wood-frame building that became Berkshire County's first Roman Catholic parochial school.

Two years ago, it was on the verge of destruction. Church leaders had decided repairs would be too costly for St. Mary's Parish, even with help from the Diocese of Springfield.

Thousands invested

Enter Toole. At the time, he was president of the L.V. Toole Insurance Agency, but he bought the building for \$1 and then in May 1989 had it moved from its foundation on Academy Street to its present site, a lot he owned at the corner of Main and Elm streets, a block away.

Originally estimating it would cost some \$200,000 to renovate, Toole today says, after a moment of contemplation, that it has in fact cost "in excess of a half million. Well in excess."

Which may be where the attention to detail has made its mark. "Essentially, every square inch has been restored," he said with a touch of pride. The inn, whose former coats of white paint have been removed and succeeded by

a softer color that might be called pewter gray, clearly stands out at the rear of a spacious, manicured lawn. A white wrought-iron table and chairs stand outside the front door, providing a guest's-eye view of a croquet court that has just been installed.

It is a nine-room inn, but Toole emphasizes that six of these rooms are really suites. They are the former classrooms on the first and second floors, reached by the dual stairway originally made for girls on one side and boys on the other.

The suites contain not only beds but parlor areas with upholstered chairs and sofas, writing desks and glass-enclosed gas fireplaces. The embossed metal ceilings, Toole observes, are 13 feet high.

Three of the suites contain two queen-size beds; the other three contain single king-size beds with canopies. The bedsteads and chests of drawers are made of cherry by Amish craftsmen, says Toole, and are designed to reflect an earlier age.

Completing the accommodations are three smaller bedrooms on a lower level that, by virtue of sloping terrain, has an exit on Railroad Street at the rear. The bedsteads and chests of drawers in these rooms are pine instead of cherry.

Off-season suite prices are \$76 a night, midweek, and \$135 on weekends, with the bedrooms

starting at \$55 apiece for a mid-week night. When the main season begins, these prices will rise to \$155 a night, midweek, and \$195 on weekends for the suites, and \$85 and up for the rooms.

The weekday rates will include not only breakfast but lunch at the Sullivan Station restaurant, diagonally across Railroad Street from the Chambéry's rear door, Toole said.

All the rooms, large and small, have tile-floored bathrooms with marble thresholds, showers with whirlpool tubs and their own climate controls. The only exception is the tub in one downstairs bedroom, which, equipped for the handicapped, has no whirlpool feature.

It is on this lowest level that there is also a kitchen, laundry, night manager's apartment and a dining room that Toole is already changing to a craft gallery, to be open sometime this summer.

"It's sort of intuitive," said Toole with a grin, explaining the gallery alteration. "It's just something I enjoy."

There will continue to be a table in the gallery for breakfasters who may want to leave the confines of their rooms, but otherwise, guests will be served breakfast *en chambre*, so to speak, from baskets designed and made for the inn to hold offerings from a menu including the Chambéry's own mixed cereal and pastry.

Naturally, there will be croissants.

In fact, there is a French flavor to the whole thing, from the hand-painted nameplates on the doors — "La Sedgwick," for example, memorializes Jane Sedgwick of Stockbridge, a 19th century convert to Roman Catholicism who paid for the school and the passage to America of the first nuns to teach in it — to wall posters, a flag of the French Department of Savoie sent to Toole by the sisters in France, and printed histories of the St. Joseph order.

These can be described as other examples of Toole's passion for detail — "Am I a frustrated architect? Yeah. I guess I am," he said — a passion that has prompted him to retain such things as the highly embossed brass doorknobs, dual stairway and the chalkboards, to name a few.

The last are already filled with messages, including one signed only with initials that says, "Who would have thought I would be spending a night in my second grade classroom 50 years later — fabulous."

When new moldings had to be installed, Toole and renovation contractor Joseph Polastri, whose company is called Hoplands Corp., searched for the closest approximations, sometimes ordering stock not available off the shelf locally. "It's been a great job," Polastri said. "A lot of fun."

The inn officially opened Oct. 1 and Toole says registrations have exceeded the number originally expected.

Fire destroys Lee warehouse



Firefighters pour water into blazing warehouse in Lee yesterday. The plume of black smoke from the fire rose so high it was visible in Lanesboro. Photos by Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Fire crews battle flames, heat



A dump truck burns furiously. Firefighters were unable to save the property.

By Abby Pratt
Berkshire Eagle Staff

5.21.91

LEE — A fire yesterday morning turned a Marble Street paper warehouse into an inferno.

A giant plume of black smoke rising from the blaze could be seen in Lanesboro, some 15 miles away. The cause of the fire is under investigation by the state fire marshal's office.

"I came out of the breezeway, and it was just like I was going into an oven," said Isolina L. Ranzoni, who has lived across the street from the warehouse for 36 years. "The flames were coming out so fast. It scared me awful."

Heat twisted beams

Some large paper bales and the building's steel skeleton, which had been sheathed in wood and corrugated aluminum, were all that remained yesterday afternoon. The heat of the fire had twisted some of the metal roof beams.

Warehouse owner Frederick J. Mercer Jr. of Housatonic, who leased the 17,000-square-foot facility to Mead Corp. Specialty Paper Division, said he and a couple of other men were using cutting torches to side the building when the fire broke out.

He said workmen from Mead were also at the warehouse at the time.

"I turned around, and it was burning,"

FIRE, continued on B7



Frederick J. Mercer Jr. of Housatonic, owner of the property, watches.



Photos by Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Intense heat twisted steel roof beams of the warehouse in which stored laminated paper from Mead Corp. of Lee.

Fire destroys Lee warehouse

■ FIRE, from A1

said Mercer. He said the building, which he has owned for 20 years, is assessed at \$500,000. He was not sure whether it was insured.

Cpl. Richard M. Smith of the state fire marshal's office said yesterday afternoon that the torches Mercer and his crew were using were among the possible causes of the fire.

Paul A. Anderson, Mead vice president for finance and planning, said the warehouse was full of decorative laminating paper. But he had no estimate of the value of the stock.

"We're going through our inventory to see what was there," he said.

Mercer's son James J. Mercer said he lost his own antique furniture, stored since January in a large shed attached to the back of the warehouse. After the warehouse fire was under control, the shed continued to burn furiously, taking two old dump trucks with it.

Hard to fight

The town dispatcher received the first report of the fire at 9:33 a.m., and 40 to 50 firefighters from Lee, Lenox and Tyringham responded, according to Fire Chief Ronald Driscoll. Stockbridge firefighters stood by at the Lee firehouse.

Driscoll said the blaze was under control before noon. He said it was a hard fire to fight because the paper bales were so tightly packed in the 1½-story structure.

Lenox Fire Chief John C. Stringer said he had some problems with water pressure, which Driscoll attributed to mud that got sucked into a screen in a relay truck.

Western Mass. Electric Co. shut off power to an overhead line with a burning transformer that threatened to fall on the building.

A vacant single-story office building adjacent to the warehouse and the Vallerie Transportation terminal nearby, both Mercer properties, were saved, although the exterior of the office building was a little charred, said Assistant Chief Paul M. Giarolo.

Treated for exhaustion

The day was clear, bright and still until around 10:40, when the wind picked up, blowing smoke and soot around. Firemen consumed large quantities of water as they took breaks from fighting the hot blaze. Sidewalk superintendents lined the street near the center of town.

Firefighter William DeFreest was treated at the scene for exhaustion. "I got a little warm and ran out of fuel," he said.

Mercer's son Robert T. Mercer was taken by Lee Ambulance to the emergency department at Berkshire Medical Center at around 3 p.m., after a paper bale fell on his leg while he was working at the fire scene. A nursing supervisor said later in the day that he was being treated for pain in his leg. He was not ad-



Firefighter William DeFreest is treated for exhaustion by Joanne Nunes of the Lee Ambulance Squad and nurse Kathleen Daoust, who is partially hidden. Daoust is a member of the Berkshire Medical Center Life Team.

mitted to the hospital.

The warehouse was still smoking in late afternoon, and Driscoll said he expected to have firemen there through most of the night.

Among the numerous onlookers during the morning was Michael E. Maher of Torrington, Conn., terminal manager for Vallerie. He said he went to the bank at 9:30 and returned to find the warehouse ablaze.

Louis P. Naventi, a retired

fireman who lives up the hill, said he was rototilling his corn lot when he looked up and saw a puff of smoke. By the time he arrived on the scene, the building was burning from one end to the other.

Inspectors to visit buildings in Lee to view plumbing

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — First it was smoke, then it was dye, now it will be people, all in search of the same thing: surface and ground water that finds its way into the town's sanitary sewer system, where it doesn't belong.

The people will be in the form of one or two inspectors from the Amherst, N.H., firm of Sebastian & Sebastian. Beginning today, they will knock on doors of various houses in or near the center of town and in parts of East Lee to ask to view such things as sumps, cellar plumbing, house and yard drains and downspouts.

The inspector, or inspectors, will have identification badges verified by town police and the Department of Public Works.

Final phase

The inspection work, which should take four to six weeks to conclude, will be the final phase in a three-phase infiltration-and-inflow study being undertaken by the town's consulting engineering firm, Tighe & Bond Inc. of Westfield. Sebastian & Sebastian is a subcontractor.

David J. Popielarczyk, the project engineer for Tighe & Bond, said the first two phases of the study, which involved use of smoke and then of dye, have led to the present phase — the last one before the company prepares a report and recommendations for the town.

Inspectors will visit about 750 buildings, most of them dwellings, in three general areas. One area is along Center Street and around Center and School streets south of the Housatonic River; another is in the section bounded by Maple and Orchard streets and Leonard Avenue; and the third is the lower section of East Lee along Water Street, south of the Massachusetts Turnpike.

"Generally, it's where the older sewers in town are located," Popielarczyk said.

The study was commissioned in 1987, when the town decided that the volume of waste water entering the then 20-year-old wastewater treatment plant was reaching the point where the state would demand a contingency plan for excess gallonage.

The plant, designed to accept 1 million gallons of waste water a day, has reached the 800,000-gallon mark on a daily basis and goes over 1 million gallons during heavy rains or in seasons when there is high runoff.

The inflow study was commissioned, said the town's DPW superintendent, J. Peter Scolforo, to

determine where surface and ground water were entering the sewer system.

Smoke was blown into the sewers in November to determine if it was coming in through storm drains, catch basins and similar ports of entry. This was followed in December with a test based on introduction of colored dye into various entrance points to confirm the smoke-test results.

Now the live inspectors will do the house and building checks.

What can sometimes be found, said Popielarczyk, are cellar drains, or sumps, for example, connected to sewer pipes rather than to storm drains, particularly in sections of a community where sewerage is the oldest.

When the study was launched, said Scolforo, town officials thought it might uncover a single major entrance for ground water into the sewer network. But so far, he said yesterday, the tests point to a multiplicity of entrances. "It's all over the whole 42 miles of sewer pipe," he said.

The final report will compare such things as costs and advisability of trying to plug the infiltration points or of building an addition to the treatment works, Popielarczyk said.

The overall study cost of about \$25,000 is to be reimbursed by the commonwealth.

Lee girls clinch division

By Derek Gentile
Berkshire Eagle Staff

With a little help from Mount Everett, the Lee Wildcats clinched the softball championship of the county's Southern Division yesterday, beating McCann 8-3 while the Eagles were stopping second place Mount Greylock, 6-5 in Sheffield. The win gives Lee a three-game lead with two to play.

School Softball

In other games, the Northern Division race got a little more tangled as Wahconah defeated Monument Mountain 11-4 and Drury stopped Pittsfield 5-0. This left the Blue Devils atop the north with a 10-3 mark and the other three teams tied for second at 9-4. Hoosac beat Taconic 15-8 in yesterday's other contest.

Lee 8, McCann 3

NORTH ADAMS — The Wildcats jumped ahead 6-0 after three innings to take control of the Hornets early. Kelsey Scarpa's two run-single accounted for the scoring in the second inning. In the third, Lee got a one-run single from Michelle Naventi and a two-run triple from Scarpa, who later came home on an error.

Lee drops school prayer from graduation

Citing a recent federal court case, Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski told the Lee School Committee that this year's graduation ceremony will not include a public prayer.

The U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a Rhode Island case later this year in which federal courts have ruled that it is unconstitutional for a school to hold a prayer at any school functions.

"I don't see how we can ignore the law," Zukowski says. "We can't have prayer at graduation and I will stop ending my talk with references to the God Almighty."

In other school news, more than 30 teachers and students at Lee High School spoke in favor of keeping Kathleen Bort's position as dean of students. School Committee members said they appreciated the comments, but could not respond to them because the committee is in contract negotiations with the teachers union. The dean-of-students position is one of the items up for discussion.

Advocate 5.22.91 DEP to test Lee soil for contamination

The state Department of Environmental Protection has hired a firm to conduct tests along Maple Street to determine the source of contaminated groundwater on the street. Although neighbors say Lee Oil was responsible for the contamination, the company denies responsibility.

Lee department heads looking to cut \$620,000 from budget

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Town department heads in the next two weeks are going to decide whether to lay off any employees, somehow cut services without layoffs, perhaps furlough employees by cutting hours, determine if offices might be closed on a periodic basis or if some combination of these can reduce town expenditures for next year by some \$620,000, or 7.2 percent.

That's what a group of town officials last night decided was the worst-case effect of last week's voter rejection of an override of the tax-limiting law and of the latest thunderbolt from Boston: further cutting of local aid.

A few even spoke of possibly raising property taxes or, if that's too repugnant, increasing fees for town services.

"I'm all in favor of upping fees," said Capital Outlay Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennas, a former selectman. "We cannot provide services we can't afford."

The most recent local-aid reduction, based on a proposal by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Thomas M. Finneran, D-Boston, to curtail Chapter 70 reimbursements, would leave Lee shorter by \$364,100 next year than it is receiving this year in aid for education.

Add to this the voters' rejection on May 13 of a \$255,000 override of the Proposition 2½ levy limit, and the town is faced with severing \$620,000 from the \$8.56 million budget its town meeting representatives approved on May 9.

All of this was hashed over in various ways last night at a meeting in the Selectmen's office before new Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa set June 3 as the date when department heads will return to put specific figures and proposed cutbacks on the table.

She said the various department heads will be apprised in the meantime of target cuts they will be expected to address. The targets could not be defined last night because of lack of information, particularly lack of a final figure on state aid.

But the assessors, for example, will calculate changes in the town's tax base to determine a little more clearly the amount of money that can be raised from property taxes. And the treasurer will suggest apportionments that may be made across the board.

What most people, from Selectmen and Finance Committee members to representatives of the Board of Public Works, School Committee and Capital Outlay Committee could agree on was that there will have to be a special town meeting soon — late June if at all possible, but more likely in July — to adopt a new budget, and possibly another town election.

The election would be necessary if an override is still required, and various officials last night talked of putting several questions, in menu form, on a ballot so that voters could choose what services they want and what they don't.

"We'll have to offer them choices," said DeVarennas. In that way, he suggested, those with

specific interests would rally fellow voters to their particular causes. "If parents see a school program that's going to be cut or teachers laid off, they'll go around and get out the voters," he said by way of example.

"If local aid is going to be cut the way they say," said Selectman Martin H. Deely, "the people are going to have to go behind the curtains again to decide what services they want and what they want to do without." The curtains he spoke of are on voting machines.

The local-aid cuts, contended Edward M. Briggs, chairman of the Board of Assessors, amount to the state sending a message to the towns; "If you want services, you're going to have to raise your own taxes."

There was some feeling among speakers that the rejection of the override last week was not merely the voice of the voters saying they do not want to pay more taxes, period. Rather, it was a rejection, several seemed to be saying, that reflected lack of information, lack of choice.

"If the new cherry sheet comes out with a loss of another \$300,000," said Finance Committee Chairman Robert B. Trask, "we could be in trouble."

A suggestion that the local-aid cuts be shared proportionately by departments was not well received, particularly by school officials. School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski, observing that this would mean cutting the school budget by a sum equivalent to 60 percent of the local aid cut, or \$240,000, said, "We'd be devastated."

To settle the matter, DEP regional engineer Stephen Joyce says test wells will be dug along the road to determine the source of contamination. Whoever is responsible will have to pay for both the tests and possibly the cleanup costs.

In other town business, Roosa said that highway engineers plan to replace the Tyringham Road bridge near the state Route 102 intersection and to redesign the intersection. The new intersection will facilitate vehicles turning onto Tyringham Road, but will require the taking of some private land, Roosa said. A public hearing will be held in the near future.

Towns ponder sharing local services

Lenox, Lee consider shaving costs by sharing government services

Historically, Berkshire towns have liked to go it alone when it comes to town services. But as local budgets shrink, more and more town officials say they can no longer afford the luxury of Yankee independence. "Some day down the road these towns will have to share a lot of things," says Lenox Selectman George L. Darey. "It's not because they're going to want to do it. They'll have to do it."

In some respects, towns already help each other out. The major regional efforts relate to schools, but other services are also shared, such as the Tri-Town Health Department that serves Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge. Firefighting at Monday's warehouse fire in Lee was the cooperative effort of fire departments in four towns.

But Darey and other local officials say towns will have to explore other ways to share services and thereby reduce costs. Traditionally, however, some town departments have been reluctant to ask for help from other towns. In Lee, Selectman Joseph F. DuPont

Kenneth LaBier of Lee Volunteer Ambulance Squad sees pluses and minuses with regionalizing

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Towns may share services to trim costs

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says he asked the Lee Department of Public Works to investigate ways to collaborate with the Lenox DPW in sharing equipment.

"They said they didn't want to do it," DuPont says. "It would be difficult. Never mind that it might save the town some money."

Nevertheless, Darey and others say new ways will have to be found to cut costs by sharing services even if later it means each town will no longer have its own dispatcher or ambulance service.

The most natural regional effort, Darey says, would involve Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and perhaps some of the other smaller towns of Tyringham, West Stockbridge and Richmond.

"We can share pieces of equipment, like a ladder truck," Darey says. "Our volunteer fire companies aren't asking for unreasonable things, but local aid is being cut and the budget situation is only getting worse. The tri-town sanitarian has worked so well, there's no reason why we couldn't set up other things up."

But Kenneth LaBier, director of the Lee Volunteer Ambulance Service, says that setting up regional organizations may not be as simple as it appears.

The Lenox Selectmen last month suggested a regional ambulance service be investigated. The Lenox Ambulance Service was at times finding itself short-handed for volunteers, said ambulance service President Eugene Hunter. Hunter suggested forming a regional ambulance service similar to the South Berkshire Ambulance that is based in Great Barrington, but serves several southern county towns. The new regional ambulance could combine existing services in Lee, Lenox, West Stockbridge and Richmond, Lenox officials say.

Lena Beal leaves lasting legacy for Lee students

Teacher wills \$60k scholarship fund, house for local groups

By Erik Bruun

After 40 years of teaching, terrorizing and inspiring Lee High School students, Lena Beal has left a lasting legacy to assist future graduating students.

The former English teacher died in February. In her will she left \$60,000 to be used for a new scholarship fund for Lee graduates.

"It's a wonderful legacy," says Lorraine Forfa, one of three trustees charged with distributing the scholarship money. "She felt so strongly about education. Her whole life was dedicated to teaching."

The Baird Scholarship Trust will distribute \$2,000 each year to a graduating student planning to continue in his or her studies. According to the will, the scholarship shall be given to a student based on "need, scholarship and character."

Beal also willed the house and property at 54 High St. in the center of Lee to be shared equally by the Lee Visiting Nurse Association, the Lee Congregational Church and the Becket Center Congregational Church.

Proposals accepted June 1

Robert Wells, who is executor of the will, says he will be accepting proposals for the property on June 1. Wells may decide to sell the house to the highest bidder and divide the money equally, or a proposal to use it may be submitted. The 103-year-old wooden house has nine rooms and includes several historic features, such as a 1914 coal stove that was used until recently.

"I have to be careful to do what is best for the three organizations," says Wells, who is a Lee native and is president of Berkshire County Savings Bank.

Both the \$60,000 and 54 High St. were placed under Beal's management by Minnie Baird, a Lee woman who was very active in civic projects for many years. Baird was one of the founders of the Lee Visiting Nurse Association, a director of the library and a member of the Cemetery Committee for more than 50 years. Baird died in 1966, leaving much of her estate to Beal.

"She could bring English alive. She made things seem very real and always talked about the history of a book and the people involved. In retrospect, she was a great teacher."

Beal taught English at Lee High School for 40 years and in many cases taught generations of families. Devoted to teaching and her students, she also developed a reputation for totally controlling her classes and expecting much from her students.

"I remember during hunting season a lot of the boys would skip school to go hunting, but they always came back at 9:45 for Miss Beal's class," Wells recalls. "She was that kind of teacher."

Appreciated more in retrospect

Forfa, one of Beal's many former students, says Beal was the type of teacher that many students appreciated in later years after they graduated from high school.

"She was quite a taskmaster," Forfa says. "When I started her class, I was so scared of her, so I was always prepared. But the longer I stayed the more I realized how much I was learning. She could bring English alive. She made things seem very real and always talked about the history of a book and the people involved. In retrospect, she was a great teacher."

Forfa and some other former students say that Beal was often misunderstood by students. Rather than being a harsh person, Forfa says she was a very caring person with a devoted interest in nature, people and education.

"She just thought her job in life was to be charged with education," Forfa says.

After retiring, Forfa says Beal would often read letters from former students thanking her for teaching them so much and preparing them properly for college. Beal, however, developed cataracts and could no longer read. But after surgery to remove the cataracts, she was again able to read the letters.

"It was one of the first things she did," Forfa says. "Those letters were so precious to her. She would just read them and read them and read them. A lot of people didn't see her human side."



The late Lena Beal, photographed above from 1956 yearbook, was a devoted English teacher at Lee High School. She has left 54 High St. in Lee, right, to the Lee VNA, and the Lee and Becket Congregational Churches.



Lee deficit mounts to \$600,000 with aid cuts

The declining economy. Cuts in local aid. Increasing costs. Negotiated salary hikes. A new town administrator. A state budget process in chaos. Proposition 2 1/2. All of these factors came crashing down on Lee officials this week as they tried to grapple with an anticipated \$600,000 deficit in local spending.

The shortfall is almost sure to mean layoffs and cuts in town services.

"We're going to have to make some cuts," says Finance Committee member

Frank Consolati. "I don't know how else we can do it. The voters don't want an override. Eight hundred to 200 -- the message was clear."

Lee residents voted down a request to raise the town's Proposition 2 1/2 levy limit for a \$238,000 budget deficit by an overwhelming majority last week. But as if the \$238,000 figure was not enough for town officials to cut, they learned Monday that a proposed reduction in state aid would mean a \$365,000 cut for Lee.

"I wish \$238,000 was the only problem for the town of Lee," Selectman Martin Deely says. Several different budget-cutting plans were presented during a meeting

of about 25 selectmen, Finance Committee members, School Committee members, assessors and other town officials on Monday night.

Possible cuts include the following:

-- An across-the-board freeze in salaries, saving about \$50,000.

-- Laying off teachers, police, DPW workers and other town-government positions.

-- Postponing the hiring of a town administrator with a salary between \$45,000 and \$50,000. "We're talking about laying off teachers and yet you're talking about bringing on a person at \$47,000 a year," School Superintendent Henry Zukowski

told the selectmen who said last week they wanted to proceed with hiring an administrator. "I'd look very closely at that if I were you."

-- Postponing minor and non-emergency capital expenses, such as painting the town firehouse.

No matter what, the selectmen say they will have to call for a special town meeting to have the town representatives vote on a new budget. Officials expect to be unable to make the full \$600,000 and may have to return to the voters for an override of a lesser figure than the \$238,000.

"We're going to have to go behind the curtain again," Deely says.

Power politics in Lee?

South Advocate

By Erik Bruun

Lee Selectman Joseph F. DuPont says the Democratic Town Committee in Lee is a "mini political machine." The party holds too much influence in local politics, and local government needs to be opened up.

Edward Briggs, chairman of the Democratic Town Committee, says the Democratic Party is simply a group of residents with common ideas who are interested in town government. The town's two political parties actively seek people interested in town government and therefore foster the democratic process.

The two divergent opinions are expected to come to a head at the town's next special town meeting when town representatives may face the question of whether to drop the town's longstanding Democratic and Republican caucuses.

"When it comes up again -- and it will come up again -- then the town reps will have to look at the question very closely," says former Selectman William D. Bean. "The voters have brought the issue back. It can't be ignored."

DuPont and Bean placed an article on the annual town-meeting warrant earlier this month to eliminate party caucuses in favor of a non-partisan caucus.

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Lee party system comes under closer scrutiny

Continued from page 1

A clear majority of town-meeting representatives voted to pass over the question. But when the issue was placed before the voters at the annual town election, residents voted 449-406 in favor of the proposition.

"Even though it was a non-binding referendum question, the voters approved it," DuPont says. "I don't see how anyone can dispute that."

The town is expected to hold a special town meeting in the near future to consider budget cuts. When that meeting is held, DuPont says he plans to place the article before the town representatives again.

In a non-partisan caucus, residents interested in running for office would place their name on the caucus ballot. A caucus would be held and the two top-vote getters would be placed on the election ballot. Candidates could still be placed on the ballot by collecting a minimum number of signatures.

Under the existing system, the Republican and Democratic town committees hold separate caucuses to nominate their own candidates for office. Independent candidates have to collect signatures to run for office if they chose not to join a political party.

Could open political process

By going to a non-partisan caucus, DuPont says the town would open up the election process.

"Historically in Lee, incumbents are very rarely challenged," DuPont says. "Every office should be challenged and often. I'm hoping with a non-partisan caucus there would always be two people running for office."

"People registered with the two parties comprise less than one-third of the voters. The overwhelming majority are independent. If they want to run for town office, they have to go in and file for papers. The minority (in the parties) doesn't have to," DuPont says.

DuPont adds that historically the candidate with the Democratic endorsement wins the local election.

"There's basically a mini political machine," says DuPont. "For reasons that I don't understand, two-thirds of the one-third (registered party members) usually hold elected positions." Briggs, however, says the party system has worked in Lee and helps assure that some positions will be contested. Democrats have been pleased to see a recent increase in party participation by the Republicans.

"I don't know where Joe is coming from," Briggs says. "He ran as a Democrat. He asked to be on our ticket. (The Democrats) work for certain causes. If someone is affiliated with us, we support them. That's the way a democracy is."

Even if the non-partisan caucus is approved, Briggs says

the Democratic Party would continue to meet to endorse local candidates and lobby for state and national issues.

Don't need to be Democratic to win

Briggs adds that the Democratic Party does pressure town officials to take stands on local issues, although he says some members may express their opinions. He also disputes the idea that the Democratic endorsement automatically means the election of the candidate.

Selectman Diane Roosa ran as an independent candidate and won with an aggressive campaign. Tax Collector Janice Smith is a very active Republican Party member and defeated a Democratic candidate for her office. "You just have to go out and meet the people," Smith says.

"We'll support independents," Briggs says. Some Democrats are discussing nominating Gordon Bailey -- who received the Republican endorsement in this year's election but was rebuffed by the Democrats -- for selectman next year (DuPont is up for re-election next year), Briggs says. "Gordon's a good man. It would make for a contest. That's what it is all about."

Briggs adds that many voters did not know what they were voting on in the non-binding referendum question. If there had been a public hearing or more publicity on the issue, Briggs says, the referendum question would have failed. A non-partisan caucus would add to the costs of town government, he adds.

Even if the non-partisan caucus is approved, Briggs says the Democratic Party would continue to meet to endorse candidates and lobby on state and national issues.

A non-partisan caucus, Briggs says, would do the most damage to the resurging Republican Town Committee.

Republican chair welcomes nonpartisanship

But Republican committee Chairman Stephen Cozzaglio says he would welcome a non-partisan caucus.

"On the local level you have too much politicking going on," he says. "If somebody can just say 'I'm interested in running' and then pick the top two, then you might take out some of the politics that we're seeing. A lot of candidates don't want to get involved in party politics. They just want to be in local government."

Cozzaglio adds that he was not surprised by the discrepancy in votes by the town-meeting representatives who voted against the non-partisan caucus and the townspeople who favored it.

"When you go to the election, it's mostly the general public who doesn't get involved who are voting," Cozzaglio says. "When you go to the town meeting, those are the people who are involved in local government. They're the ones who are active and go to the caucuses, so they're going to vote for the party caucuses. I'd rather have the general public in charge."

Cozzaglio says he has seen an increase recently in the amount of party and power politics going on in town.

"There's more power politics going on now than I've ever seen," he says. "If there's not more, it's more visible. There always seems to be a fight."

Lee S'men reject Carlino appointment

Rebuffed in her attempt to hire an assistant town clerk-treasurer, Lee Town Clerk Patricia D. Carlino told the Lee Selectmen Monday she would have to close her office on Thursdays and Fridays.

Carlino told the board she would appoint Suzanne Scarpa as assistant town clerk and treasurer. The selectmen, however, told Carlino she would have to wait until July 1 to make the appointment. The town's inter-departmental secretary at Memorial Hall, Patricia Walsh, will carry out the duties of the job until then.

After July 1, however, funding for the position -- which is appointed by the selectman -- will end because the town-meeting representatives voted in favor of fiscal 1992 funding for an assistant town clerk-treasurer -- which is appointed by the town clerk-treasurer.

Walsh has written a letter to the selectmen expressing her objections to her treatment by the town. Walsh -- who is from Pittsfield -- says the town discriminates against non-Lee residents. She cites residents' re-

marks berating the selectmen for hiring "an outsider."

Further, Walsh says the town is enmeshed in a "political network" that disregards or rejects anyone who does "not fit into the power structure of empire builders." Walsh adds she has worked under "impossible conditions, both physically and emotionally." Walsh included a letter from her physician, saying she was unfit for to work for the next three weeks.

Carlino -- who questioned many aspects of the letter -- says she needs help in her office and will be forced to close the office two days a week if she is not allowed to appoint Scarpa in Walsh's absence.

"I take great exception that I'm not being allowed to exercise my right of office to appoint," Carlino said. Selectmen agreed to reconsider her request next week.

Selectmen's Chairman Diane Roosa added that she would like Walsh's physician to explain what illness prevents Walsh from working. Roosa says Walsh answered a help-wanted ad that Roosa placed privately.

Raging inferno destroys \$1.5 million

The owner of the Lee warehouse destroyed in a devastating fire Monday plans to rebuild the structure.

Raging flames engulfed the Marble Street building Monday morning, destroying an estimated \$1.5 million in property. The owner, Frederick J. Mercer Jr. of Housatonic, says the building was partially insured.

"I hope to rebuild it," Mercer said Tuesday evening. The fire quickly spread through the Marble Street building, which literally went up like paper.

Mead Corp. Specialty Paper Division stored hundreds of rolls of excess paper at the warehouse. The fire will not affect operations at Mead.

Although fire officials say they are still investigating the blaze, workmen at the warehouse say the inferno was ignited by workers replacing the metal siding of the half-acre building. The crew worked for Mercer.

The flame from a cutting torch pierced the metal skin near the north end of the building, setting fire to insulation, says George Lavalley, who was working inside the warehouse at the time.

"I looked up and all I saw was fire," Lavalley says.

A passing motorist reported the fire by telephone at 9:33 a.m., but by the time the Lee Volunteer Fire Department arrived, the cavernous one-and-a-half-story building was fully engulfed in flames.

The warehouse was the only off-site storage facility for Mead, which used the paper for recyclable pulp. Mead vice president for planning and finances Paul Anderson says the fire will not interrupt the operation of the Lee paper company.

Paper insured

"We essentially had raw materials that will have to be replaced," Anderson says. "I don't think there's anything of value left."

No official estimates have been made of the value of the paper, Anderson says, adding that that will be the job of Mead's insurance company. The paper was fully insured.

A Mead officer who requested anonymity, however, estimated that the recycled paper was worth about \$1 million. He added that the replacement cost of the paper would be closer to \$2 million because the company will have to buy virgin pulp to make up for the loss.

Most of Mead's materials are stored on site, Anderson said. The company had minor problems with maintenance at the warehouse, such as a leaky roof, Anderson said, but the problems "were not systemic."

Mercer bought the building in 1979 for \$50,000. The town had assessed the building last year at \$343,900 and the total property at \$474,800. In addition to the stored paper, the fire destroyed equipment at the scene, including a dump truck and furniture kept in the building by Mercer's son, James Mercer. Mercer says he stored some of his belongings in the building including equipment from the Great Barrington landfill that Mercer used to own.

Firemen succeeded in preventing the fire from spreading to nearby buildings owned by Vallierie Trucking.

One fireman, William DeFreest, was treated at the scene for exhaustion. In midafternoon, well-after the fire had been controlled, Mercer's son, Robert T. Mercer, was injured when one of the mammoth rolls of paper fell on his



Firefighters could do little to save the Marble Street warehouse other than make sure the inferno did not spread to neighboring buildings. Although firemen from four towns had the fire under control within a few hours after arriving on the scene, it took many more hours under a hot sun to fully extinguish the blaze that destroyed hundreds of bales of tightly wrapped paper owned by Mead Corp. Specialty Paper Division.

Page 19 The Advocate May 22, 1991

leg. He was treated at Berkshire Medical Center for the injury.

Lee Fire Chief Brian Driscoll says the Lee, South Lee, Lenox, Tyringham and Stockbridge fire departments responded to the blaze, and also the Lee Police Department, Lee Ambulance Squad and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. Joe's Diner, Price Chopper and Lee Liquors provided food and drinks to firemen who battled the inferno under sunny skies and -- depending on how close to the fire they were -- hot-weather conditions. Fire trucks used water from neighboring Lee Lime quarries in addition to water hydrants near the scene.

The fire caused a spectacle throughout central Berkshire County. A *Berkshire Eagle* photographer saw the plume of smoke billowing out of the central Lee building from Lanesboro.

Rotary Honors Local Students

LEE -- Four students each from Lee High School and Lenox High School were honored May 21 for their accomplishments by the Tri-Town Rotary Club during its first student recognition day.

Honored from Lenox were Claire Skinner (academics), Kate Coulehan (fine arts), Tim Weaver (athletics) and Salah Zabian (community service). Students cited from Lee were Cindy Cahalan (academics), Tim Bianco (fine arts), Michele Naventi (athletics) and Brenda Dupras (community service).

Club president Robert Birch said the Rotary would hold the event annually.

Lee teachers urge reappointment of dean of students at high school

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE -- Kathleen Bort, who has been dean of students at Lee High School for three years and may not be reappointed, has won a round of endorsements from colleagues, students and parents who want to see the position made permanent and Bort reappointed to it.

The appeal was enunciated by a half-dozen of the 30 or more spectators at a School Committee meeting Monday night at the Central School. It was held that night instead of last night because Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski had to attend the Otis annual town meeting last night.

The fear of teachers is that the school board will stick to a decision it made in the past year to alternate the dean's position by not keeping anyone in the post more than three years.

"No one here wants the job. Everyone wants Kathy to be reappointed," said Patricia White, a teacher who was president of the Lee Education Association three years ago when the job was fashioned.

At the time, said White, the committee and the union "embarked on a joint venture" under which the position was established for one year, to see if it would be a success.

Previously, the high school had a vice principal, but that position was being eliminated and the dean of students created to save some costs. The vice principalship was a year-around post and the deanship was being made concurrent with the teaching year, which is shorter. The pay was set as regular teacher's pay as well.

Bort, a high school biology teacher who had been in the school system 16 years, submitted an application and received the appointment. She has applied for and been reappointed to the post each year since.

Subject of negotiations

School committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey said committee members couldn't comment on the status of the job or on the supportive remarks from Bort's colleagues because the post is under discussion in contract negotiations with the teachers union. But he did say that the remarks constituted a "very positive type of input" and that they would be heard by board members who serve on the negotiations subcommittee.

Lahey would not say why the post is a subject of negotiations, but English teacher Cheryl D. Nelsen provided a clue when she said it is a "psychological burden

to ask someone to reapply [for the job] each year."

"Please let this be a permanent position," she said.

Others agreed. Teacher Bruce Lorraine said Bort has matured in the position and has worked at it day and night.

"She's a person I feel can't be replaced," said Lisa Pyenson of Otis, a third-year student at Lee High School. "We've had her there not only as dean of students, but as a friend."

Robert Lohbauer, a teacher with 19 years' service in Lee, said Bort has been a strong advocate, has been creative and has enlarged the resources available for the work. "I can't imagine the position without her," he said.

A statement on behalf of the Lee Education Association was read by Diane Ferrero, who said the association "strongly favored reappointment" of Bort and urged the committee to consider it a vital issue.

Lahey did say the post is in the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. But he also told listeners he and other board members had just returned from a Selectmen's meeting, where town officials were told to begin cutting their budgets because the town's revenues are taking a sharp plunge.

Rotary Honors Local Students

LEE -- Four students each from Lee High School and Lenox High School were honored May 21 for their accomplishments by the Tri-Town Rotary Club during its first student recognition day.

Honored from Lenox were Claire Skinner (academics), Kate Coulehan (fine arts), Tim Weaver (athletics) and Salah Zabian (community service. Students cited from Lee were Cindy Cahalan (academics), Tim Bianco (fine arts), Michele Naventi (athletics) and Brenda Dupras (community service).

Club president Robert Birch said the Rotary would hold the event annually. Noting that in the past the club had recognized particular achievements, such as the Lee Girls' Basketball Team's state championships, "we feel it is important to include various aspects of students' educational experience as well."

Berk, Courier.

Legal but not necessarily moral

To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

At the war crimes trial in Nuremberg, Germany, Hitler's henchmen argued that they had broken no laws. Germany's own legal system, they contended, permitted the elimination of those who impeded the advance of the Third Reich. Adolph Eichmann protested before his execution, I had to obey the laws of war and my flag. In our country, a group protesting an abortion clinic was charged with slander because they had called abortionists murderers. The abortionists argued, as had the accused at Nuremberg: You can't call someone who isn't breaking a law, a murderer.

Both the experience of Nuremberg and today's silent holocaust in our abortion clinics bear eloquent witness to the fact that when a state believes it is accountable to no one except itself, it assumes a hidden premise that whatever is legal is moral.

Robert H. Jackson, chief counsel for the United States at the Nuremberg Trials, was forced to appeal to permanent values, to moral standards transcending the lifestyles of a particular society. In effect, he argued that there is a law beyond the law that stood in judgment on the arbitrary changing opinions of men.

Today the shape of America is being altered by use of the same strategy. The Supreme Court, influenced by the humanistic trends, has helped to brainwash

our people to believe that what ever is legal is moral. They would argue that there is no law above human laws.

This is not the case of our Founding Fathers. Whether individually Christian or not, there was a general consensus of theism, the belief that God existed and the new republic was based upon this foundation. This understanding profoundly influenced their view of law and government.

As the Christian world view has faded, America has turned not to the laws of God, but to what is called sociological law. Law is only what the majority wants, or what the judges say it is. Thus in 1973, the Supreme Court invalidated the abortion laws of 50 states and legalized abortion on demand. Where did the court get the notion that a woman has a right to an abortion? Such right is not found in the Constitution. The court made it up. Like Napoleon, it crowned itself emperor — answerable to no one — not even the American people.

Such distortion of rights has also opened the doors to pornography under the guise of a free press, and to the offense of the public at large. As Christians we must explode the myth that whatever is legal is moral. What men make legal is not necessarily moral.

HENRY PIEKOS

143 Prospect St.
Lee

Lee warehouse fire is ruled accidental

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The fire that destroyed a 17,000-square-foot, metal-sheathed warehouse and its paper contents Monday morning was accidentally set, a state fire marshal's representative said yesterday.

State police Cpl. Richard Smith, who is assigned to the fire marshal's office in Berkshire County, said yesterday that evidence clearly points to ignition being caused by a red-hot iron bolt and window bracket that fell inside the building into a roll of paper, setting it on fire.

Workmen had been cutting off the metal window casings with acetylene torches preparatory to installing new sheathing, he said, and had been working their way down the building for about a week without incident.

But one of the bolt ends and the bracket it held in place apparently dropped to the floor in a section of the building where the paper rolls were piled in disorganized fashion, he said, and lay against a roll long enough to ignite it.

"It would have been red hot, like a coal," he said.

The warehouse, a steel-framed structure sheathed and roofed in corrugated aluminum, was filled with rolls of paper stored there by Mead Corp. Specialty Paper Division under lease from owner Frederick J. Mercer Jr. of Housatonic. The building was assessed for \$500,000.

Paul A. Anderson, Mead vice president for finance and planning, said the value of the paper that went up in smoke and flame was "substantial," but he declined to put a dollar figure on it.

Throughout most of the building, the paper rolls were stacked in organized fashion, Smith said. Rolls were more haphazardly piled in the section where the fire started, he continued, because they contained paper that was going to be recycled.

The paper was mostly decorative laminating paper used in manufacture of countertops and the like.

Smith said the workmen, who were removing the old windows in order to place new siding over the openings, had been aware of the potential for fire and had a hand-pumped portable water tank on the job with them. But they were working outside the building, he said, and the brackets and bolt ends dropped on the inside. Most appeared to have landed on a horizontal steel brace just below the window ledges, but not all of them.

Mercer said yesterday he will have to take down what's left of the building after the insurance coverage is settled. He also said he would like to put up another such warehouse on the site but had no idea when that could be done.

Lee High students have good track record

To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

I was saddened to read the May 16 letter from C. Francese, who wrote of an unfortunate incident allegedly involving several Lee High School students at Herberg Middle School on Primary Day.

It's important to remember that most Lee High School students chose to attend classes that day, and that this isolated case does not reflect the behavior and attitudes of all of our students.

This year, I have watched many Lee High School students conduct an Oxfam Fast for World Hunger; collect baskets of food for needy families in the town; plan a phonathon for the Heart Association, which netted over \$2,000 in pledges; design and execute, "Good Deeds for the Elderly Projects," and many other worthwhile community service projects.

The students I work with on a daily basis do know and appreciate the importance of the democratic process, and work very hard to make a positive impact on their community. We applaud their efforts.

DIANE M. FERRERO

Lee

The writer is a U.S. history teacher at Lee High School.

Lee students plan program against drinking, driving

LEE — Twenty Lee High School juniors and seniors will take part today in a project designed to warn fellow students against drinking and driving on prom and graduation nights.

Lisa Pyenson of Otis, a student in the school's peer counseling program, said the project is called a "white-out" in which students in the peer counseling program dress in black, paint their faces white and do not speak, to give the impression of death, the ultimate consequence of drinking and driving.

The project will conclude with an assembly and speaking program at 1:30 p.m.

Graduation and prom nights will be June 1 and 9, respectively.

Eagle 5.24.91

Plans announced for Lee ceremony

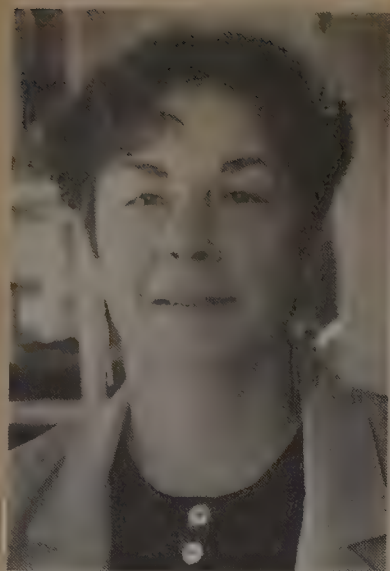
LEE — This town's Memorial Day parade will begin on Monday at 10 a.m. at Elm and Main streets and will proceed to the Fairmont Cemetery for the traditional ceremony, according to Joseph J. Scapin Sr., commander of the sponsoring Bossidy-Crear post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He said participating units are being asked to meet at 9:30 a.m. at Railroad and Elm streets to form the line of march. Marchers will go down Main Street, turn east on Housatonic Street to Fuller Street, and then to the cemetery.

After the ceremony, the parade units will return the same way, to High Street, Academy Street, and then to the Lee Youth Association building for refreshments.

"Anyone who has not been contacted is welcome to join in," Scapin said.

Eagle 5.25.91



Joel Librizzi

Paula Schutzmann
Eagle 5.23.91

Lee VNA board names director to succeed Beacco

LEE — Paula Schutzmann has been appointed executive director of the Lee Visiting Nurse Association, succeeding Ann Beacco, who retired in early May.

Schutzmann most recently worked as the director of health services at the Kimball Farms retirement community in Lenox, from last July until May. Prior to that, she worked for the Lee VNA from 1980 to 1989 as a special programs coordinator and the nursing supervisor.

As director, Schutzmann said her goals are to continue the Lee VNA's "high quality of service and direct, personal style" that set it apart from the larger hospital-operated association.

The Lee agency, she said, has seen significant growth in recent years because of the shift to more home care. In 1990, the agency logged 21,260 visits, operated with a nearly \$1 million budget and finished the year with a slight surplus, Schutzmann said.

Territory expanded

Its territory has expanded beyond Lee and into Central and Southern Berkshire as well as neighboring communities like Blandford, Russell and Montgomery. It is the official Board of Health representative now in Lee, Tyringham, Becket, Otis, Stockbridge and Sandisfield.

Schutzmann earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of California at Berkeley in 1967 and taught social studies at Crosby Junior High School in Pittsfield from 1970 to 1971 and was a special education tutor from 1972 to 1980.

In 1976, she received an associate's degree in nursing from Berkshire Community College and a master's degree in nursing in 1988 from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

She worked at Berkshire Medical Center from 1978 to 1980 in the rehabilitation unit and in the Neighborhood Health Center and from 1989 to 1990 with Berkshire County Detoxification Center and Upjohn Healthcare as a supervisor.

Schutzmann lives in Stockbridge with her two children.

A Dawdy tale of migration

Eagle 5.25.91

For those of us who came to the Berkshires from the West, this is the beginning of Massachusetts and not the end.

In fact, we didn't realize that the West Stockbridge tollbooth operated essentially only one way. Seven windows for those coming in and only one reserved for exiting the state had come under fire as a sure sign of government waste, nepotism and corruption.

Of course, things have changed and the odds are now 7 to 1 for leaving the state. The inbound lane is kept open as a courtesy to truckers coming into the state to cart out the dismantled miracle and move it to Kansas or Taiwan, and for a few New Yorkers who still vacation in Maine. We need the toll money.

Things are so quiet on the eastbound lanes they have decided to rename the toll road. Now it will be called the Mass Flounder, all the Pikes having migrated to other more prosperous lakes, except for a few rumored to be in the depths of Pontoonuc. The Mass Millions have been reduced to the Mass Thousands, I have been informed by a source close to the lottery.

Also rumored to be in the works is a stamp similar to the wildlife stamp that you have to buy with your fishing license for \$5. This would be similar to an exit visa but would not actually be an exit visa as such things are forbidden by the interstate commerce clause of the Constitution. The purpose of this visa would not be to restrict the flow of free commerce between the states, but to serve as a revenue raiser

The picture on the exit stamp will be a very Norman Rockwell scene.

for Massachusetts. Well, they reason, it worked for the fishing license. The price went from \$12.50 to \$17.50, including the wildlife stamp. They collected a mandatory \$5 fee without technically raising the fee on the fishing license itself.

The picture on the exit stamp will be a very Norman Rockwell scene — a man with a blue-collar shirt, his hair neatly cut, with shining cheeks and a black lunch box in hand, smiling as he departs his home on the way to work, his black cocker spaniel, 2.3 kids and pinafore-wearing wife beaming at him with hope and pride. You can redeem the stamp at the last toll booth for the cost of the toll from your entrance to the last exit.

A sleepy family pulled up to the last gas station on the westbound this week, their possessions inside a large orange rental truck with the Land of Lincoln painted on the side and the slogan An Adventure in Moving writ large and bold in dark blue.

The Uhalls (their real name, but no relation to the former secretary of the Interior) had thrown in the towel, along with the black lunch box and the blue-collar shirt.

How do you get to Kansas? asked Mr. Uhall. Do you have a map we could buy? I pulled down a map of the Eastern United States. That'll be two-o-five, I said, offering him the map. He looked at it with bloodshot eyes. Where's Kansas? he asked. I've lived in Massachusetts for the past 22 years. We're goin' to live with my wife's folks. She's from Kansas.

I knew Kansas was in the Midwest, but I wasn't sure of the most direct route. The only one I knew of was the part where you click your heels together three times, but that was in a Hollywood movie. I wasn't sure it would really work, never having tried it myself.

Let's take a look, I said, peering over Mr. Uhall's shoulder. He traced the route with his finger. The map stopped at St. Louis, Mo., but he was confident that the same Interstate 70 that went to St. Louis would continue on to Kansas.

Mrs. Uhall and the little Uhall children returned from the restroom, and the tiny caravan made up of the family car and the giant orange truck soon roared to life and began the journey to Kansas.

I was about to ask them if they had purchased their exit visa, when these five guys in a beat-up Toyota pulled in, not for gas, but for a map of the United States. I said the only one I had stopped at St. Louis, But I had an Atlas for \$8.35.

We'll take it, they said, and counted out the cost in nickels and dimes. Where ya headed? I asked.

Nevada, they shouted, with an "Arsenio Hall whoop whoop whoop," and were off into the starry night.

D.R. Dawdy is employed at the Mobil stations on the eastbound and westbound sides of the Massachusetts Turnpike in Lee.



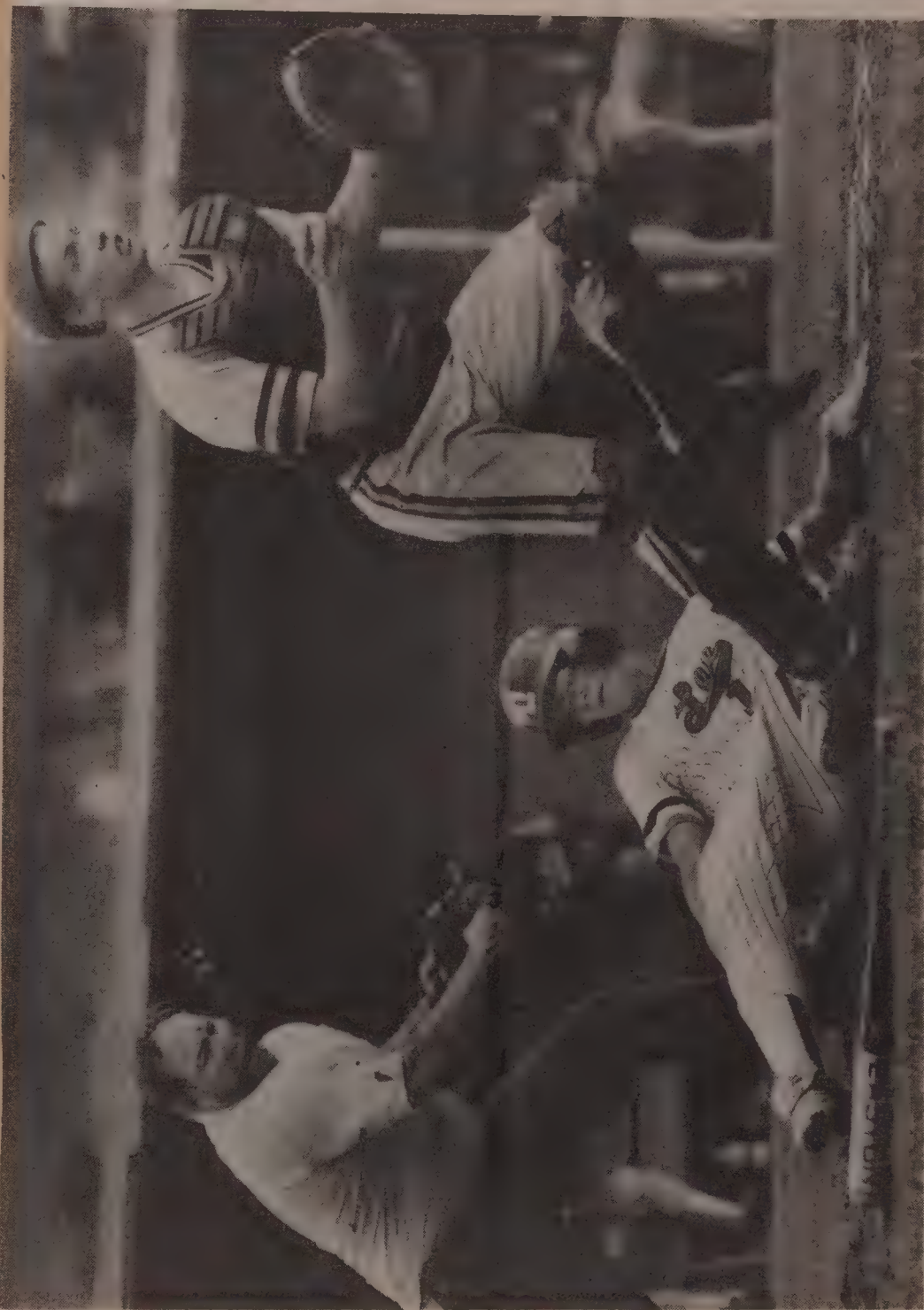
Michele Naventi

Cynthia Cahalen

Eagle 5.28.91

Cahalen, Naventi to speak at Lee High's graduation

LEE — Cynthia Cahalen, valedictorian, and Michele Naventi, salutatorian, will speak at the Lee High School commencement exercises on June 8 at Tanglewood. Cahalen, the daughter of John and Pat Cahalen of Stockbridge Road, also has been awarded the Chancellor's Merit Scholarship, a four-year waiver of tuition at the University of Massachusetts for high academic achievement. She was All Berkshire and All Western Massachusetts in her junior and senior year in soccer and basketball. She also received the Sportsmanship Award in 1990 and played in the Bay State Games.



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Eagle 5.26.91

No doubt about it

McCann Tech catcher Faron Finney surveys the field after tagging out Lee baserunner Jeff Puleri yesterday afternoon at Joe Wolfe Field. Making the call on the play is umpire Jimmy Farry. Lee won the game 5-3 on the final day of play in the Berkshire County baseball league. Story on Page C2.

Kish calls denial of sign permit discrimination

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — L. George Kish, co-owner of the Black Swan Inn at Laurel Lake, contending he is a victim of discrimination by town officials, returned Tuesday night to a longstanding attempt to get the Selectmen to allow him to install a second sign on his building.

The town's zoning bylaw allows only one.

As on past occasions, he did not get what he asked for, but, possibly because it is a newly constituted Board of Selectmen, there was a note of sympathy this time that was absent in the past.

Chairman Diane P. Roosa, who said she was willing to make an exception on the inn's behalf, told Kish to come back next Monday for another try.

Selectman Martin H. Deely, who was elected to the board two weeks ago, said he is out of touch

with the bylaw and wants to re-read it between now and then and then look at the signs at the inn.

Maybe, he said, some compromise solution will suggest itself. He, too, seemed willing to bend the bylaw.

Many town officials concede the bylaw has been bent almost beyond recognition already.

Kish, who occasionally becomes emotional when arguing with the Selectmen about his signs, said Tuesday night he was "in a quandary why we are being discriminated against." By we, he referred to himself and his wife, Sallie Kate, co-owner.

The inn, he said, "provides in excess of \$30,000 on the 4 percent [rooms] tax. It is not a slop house. We're paying our taxes. We're not \$230,000 in arrears like the Oak 'n Spruce [in South Lee]." Yet there are business owners in town, he maintained, without naming

them, that have mounted two or more signs on their buildings and remain unscathed.

Last winter, Lee Building Inspector Robert W. Lester filed complaints against the Kishes in Southern Berkshire District Court on grounds they violated the bylaw by putting up the second sign. Instead of issuing a finding, the court continued the matter to Aug. 26 after the Kishes removed it.

Ironically, according to Roosa, they had permission to install raised letters on one end of their inn, but wanted to put up the second sign instead.

On Tuesday night, George Kish charged that "there are people [in Lee] who put signs on awnings and all kinds of tricks" to evade the bylaw, but none of them is penalized as is the Black Swan.

He wanted to know why Lester doesn't enforce the bylaw against others, and Lester, who was listening, said he was doing just that. "I'm taking two to court right now," he said, adding that one of them is the big filling station south of the Massachusetts Turnpike called Diesel Dan's.

Exceptions questioned

"If we can make an exception for Clark-Aiken," said Roosa, "why can't we here?" She re-

ferred to an exception granted by the Selectmen a couple of years ago to the former Clark-Aiken-Matik company, whose business has since been purchased by the Germany-based E.C.H. Will, a maker of paper-cutting machinery.

"They put two signs on their building but took down their free-standing sign," said Lester, who subsequently said, in an exasperated tone, "Am I supposed to do it [enforce the bylaw] or not? I'm tired of playing games."

There is no flexibility in the bylaw, said the third selectman, Joseph F. Dupont, who has consistently held out for one sign on the Black Swan building and one free-standing sign at the parking lot entrance, as the bylaw permits.

"It's interesting to note," said Deely to Kish, "that if your sign said Black Swan Restaurant instead of Black Swan Inn, you could put it up, you'd be legal. Maybe there's a message in that."

The bylaw allows one sign on a building for each business in the building. The trouble with Deely's suggestion about the restaurant is that the restaurant at the Black Swan is called the Cygnet. It has its own free-standing sign by the parking lot entrance.

Lee High School scholarship created by Lena Beal's will

LEE — Lena M. Beal of High Street, who taught English at Lee High School for 40 years and who died in February, established a \$60,000 trust in her will to produce scholarships for graduates of the school.

An award of no less than \$2,000 will be made each year to a student or students at the high school as a result of Beal's bequest. Under the terms of her will, the trust is named for the late Minnie L. Baird, a community leader devoted to activities in the Lee Congregational Church and Lee Visiting Nurse Association, as well as a founder of the Abner Rice scholarship fund.

Trustees of the money, which Baird had bequeathed to Beal, are Dr. Charles W. Stratton III of Park Street, Rita L'Heureux of Greylock Street and Lorraine M. Forfa of Maritta Avenue. A faculty committee, in consultation with the trustees, will choose the scholarship recipient or recipients.

Additional money in the trust was left in equal parts to the Congregational Church and the VNA, as well as to Becket Center Congregational Church.

Proceeds of the sale of Beal's house at 54 High St., also owned

by the Baird trust, will also go to the two churches and VNA. The house will be open for inspection Saturday from 7:30 to 11 a.m., according to Robert A. Wells of Lenox, estate administrator.

Beal left her own estate to the Congregational Church, Boston University and 13 individuals.

Beal died Feb. 18 at Hillcrest Hospital at age 87. After earning bachelor's and master's degrees at BU, she taught in Sheffield from 1925 to 1928 and then moved to Lee, where she taught English until her retirement in 1968.



Eagle 5.31.91

Photos by Bob McDonough / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Most successful group in yesterday's Western Mass. Individuals golf championship in Greenfield exchange congratulations. State qualifier Jake Naventi of Lee, right, shakes hands with overall winner Brian Welker of Longmeadow, who had 4-under-par 68. Greenfield's Mike Leete, left, also qualified.

Squabble Over Advisory Board
LEE — The Selectmen last month appointed then-member William D. Bean to serve as its representative to the Berkshire County Advisory Board -- a body which has control over the county government budget.
Mr. Bean did not run for office in May. But he still intends to serve on the board, and the Selectmen agree.
The County Commission, however, has said that only sitting town Selectmen may serve.
A larger issue, according to a report in *The Berkshire Eagle*, is Mr. Bean's interest in the growing interest in the Legislature to close down county governments and

have the commonwealth assume operations of the jails and registries of deeds.

County Commissioners Peter F. Menard and John Pignatelli favor retaining county government, which they say is far more efficient than if it were run by the state. *Berk. Courier*



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

A group of high school students walk toward the house they constructed on the Via Maria in Lee as part of a joint South Berkshire school project.

Student carpenters complete their 14th house in 18 years

Caropreso to Relocate Lee Gallery In Jenifer Complex in Barrington

By Christine Burns

GREATBARRINGTON—A local auctioneer is forging ahead with plans to move his \$2 million operation from a restored church in Lee to an open spot in the Jenifer House Complex on Stockbridge Road.

Louis Caropreso, owner of Caropreso Galleries currently located in a former Methodist church at 136 High Street, confirmed Wednesday that he has plans to move his business to Great Barrington.

"Although it might not have all the charm of our old church, I think it's going to be a great move for us," said Caropreso, a

state-licensed auctioneer since 1970.

"I expect to triple my business at that location."

Caropreso said that the reason for the move was grounded in the fact that currently his operation is located in a residential district. He had to acquire a special permit from the town 10 years ago to house a gallery there. One of the terms of the special permit is that Caropreso can only hold 11 auctions per year.

"I plan to have an auction every other week at the Jenifer House," said Caropreso.

Although he has not had any correspondence with town officials, Caropreso said that he did

not expect to encounter opposition to the move since the new location falls within a district zoned for business.

Both Selectmen Edward T. Morehouse and Planning Board chairman William Barrett felt that the use of the Jenifer House as an auction gallery fell well within the zoning bylaws of the town.

Caropreso said that he hopes to move the operation, which will be located in the 7,000 square-foot warehouse previously used for storage, by July 1. He added, noting that he would need time to renovate the warehouse, that he would not hold an auction until after the Big Apple Circus has finished its performances on July 14.

The gallery currently features 18th century Americana merchandise and has a clientele comprised mostly of second home owners "who are furnishing their houses in country."

"In the past, I've sort of scared away the customer that might have a hundred, five hundred or a thousand dollars to spend. We advertise internationally and catered to mostly the people who can spend in the five thousand to one hundred thousand range," said Caropreso.

"I plan to stay with the Americana stock, but try to hold general auctions on a regular basis for the people we might have scared away in the past and then every eighth week or so hold a special, really important auction for the higher-priced customer."

Lee Fire Traced to Red-Hot Bolt

LEE—The fire that destroyed the Mead paper warehouse on Marble Street was caused by a red-hot iron bolt and window bracket that fell into the structure and ignited a paper roll.

According to State police Cpl. Richard Smith who is assigned to the Berkshire County fire marshal's office, workmen released the coal-hot bolt and bracket into the building while making exterior repairs with acetylene torches.

The heated metal landed in a disorganized stack of paper rolls that had been earmarked for recycling. Mead has not disclosed the value of the lost merchandise which was mainly laminating paper used for countertops and other decorating purposes.

The corrugated steel building, assessed for \$500,000, was leased to Mead by owner, Frederick J. Mercer who plans to build a new warehouse on the site after insurance claims have been settled.

Berk. Record 5.31.91



Drury third baseman Erin O'Hearn (9) runs to hug pitcher Jennifer Moreau (7) after the Blue Devils clinched the Berkshire County softball title yesterday. Also celebrating

the win are shortstop Jennifer Miller, left, and second baseman Tammy Caruso. Moreau pitched a one-hitter as the Blue Devils beat the Lee Wildcats 1-0.

Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Drury girls win county softball, 1-0

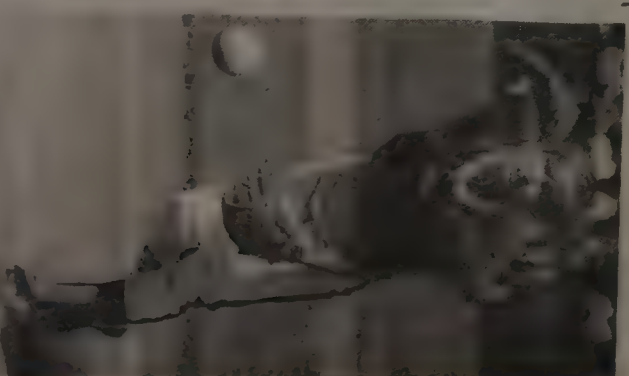
By Howard Herman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Lee softball coach Pete Warywoski predicted the Berkshire County championship game would be a pitchers' duel that could turn on a misplay. Unfortunately for Warywoski, he was right.

A throwing error in the top of the eighth inning allowed pinch-runner Sue King to score from second, and Drury's Jennifer Moreau pitched a one-hitter as the Blue Devils beat Lee 1-0 yesterday to win the title.

"I thought this game was never going to end," smiled Drury coach John Solari. "Now I know why they started at 3:15. It was a game of breaks, and we got the one break."

The county championship is the first for the Blue Devils since 1986. The loss snapped Lee's 10-game winning streak, while Drury softball, continued on C3



Jennifer Moreau
Pitches one-hit shutout
Leslie Noyes



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee's Kelsey Scarpa, left, heads to first base in the fifth inning of yesterday's county championship softball game as Drury first baseman Beth Goodell waits for the ball.

Drury girls edge Lee for title, 1-0

■ **SOFTBALL**, from C1
now has a seven-game winning streak.

"I think the team's down right now, they wanted to win so much," said Warywoski. "But I think we'll come back — we'll be ready for the tournament."

Both teams move into the Western Massachusetts softball tournament beginning tomorrow.

Moreau and Lee's Michele Naventi traded zeroes in the best pitchers' duel of the year. Both had no-hitters through four innings, and Naventi kept hers going through the regulation seven innings.

"I was feeling a lot of pressure," said Moreau of the duel, "especially when there's no score — I do feel nervous."

Both pitchers recorded goose eggs in the scorebook through seven innings, doing it in similar fashion. Moreau struck out five batters, the fifth giving her 300 career strikeouts. The senior righthander, who walked 21 all season, didn't walk a batter yesterday. Lee hit only four balls into the outfield for the eight innings, three shallow fly outs and a single.

Naventi practically matched Moreau pitch for pitch. The senior righthander struck out one, and also allowed only four balls into the outfield in the game. She didn't walk a batter until the

eighth.

Carrie O'Brien led off the eighth with a popup to Wildcat first baseman Becky Rollins, then Tracy Rougeau, pinch-hitting for Jen Gelinas, was walked by Naventi on a 3-2 pitch. King ran for Rougeau, moved to second on a passed ball and watched Tammy Caruso pop to Kelsey Scarpa at third for the second out of the inning. It was here where Solari played a hunch.

"Nobody else has hit [Naventi]. You start looking around and say, 'Gee, let's try somebody different,'" explained Solari of his decision to let catcher Kim Morin, who hit .137 in only 29 at-bats, hit for designated hitter Dawn LaCasse.

Morin hit a one-strike pitch to shortstop Dina Souza, whose throw sailed over Rollins' head, allowing the speedy King to cross the plate with an unearned run. Betsy Sherman then broke up Naventi's no-hitter with a bloop single to right, and Jennifer Miller ended the frame by popping to Rollins.

Morin quickly put her gear back on for the home eighth, but she

almost didn't need to. Moreau threw six pitches in the inning to give Drury the win. Heather Stannard popped to Morin for the first out, Vanessa Piacentino popped to shortstop, and Doreen Eckert grounded back to Moreau for the final out.

"I felt really good [pitching] early on," Moreau said. "I warmed up a lot. Sometimes, the harder I pitch, the harder they hit [the ball]. I tried to get the first strike in — and it helped."

Lee's best chance

Moreau lost her no-hitter, and almost lost her shutout, in the fifth inning. With one out, Scarpa reached first when first baseman Beth Goodell couldn't handle Morin's throw. Scarpa moved up when Stannard singled to center. But Moreau bore down, striking out Piacentino and Eckert to end the frame.

"We had two shots to score what would have been the winning run in regulation," said Warywoski. "I considered going for the bunt, but Drury plays the bunt well. We gambled. We had confidence in our batters, but it didn't succeed."

Olver backs investing in the people

To the Editor of THE EAGLE:—

On Tuesday, national attention will be focused on the decision we will be making in the 1st Congressional District. As we vote, we will be making a statement about the direction we want to take both as a state and as a nation. We will be making the decision in the midst of the most trying economic conditions. However, adversity also brings opportunity and challenge. The quality of our future depends on the investment decisions we make today. Hopefully, we eventually become aware that the most important investment we can make is in people.

Fortunately, we in Berkshire County have been blessed with astute, energetic representatives who recognize the importance of investing in "human capital" by which we all eventually share in an improved standard of living. The truth is that we really can not afford to not invest in our commonwealth, which is why I believe the decision we face in this election is easy to make despite campaign rhetoric. After studying their records and positions it is crystal clear that John Olver shines forth as the best representative of and for our commonwealth.

NEIL F. CLARKE

73 Orchard St.
Lee

Thoughtful voters will vote John Olver

To the Editor of THE EAGLE:—

It seems we've heard that song before. The "Piercing" cry of "He is a tax lover" is not a new refrain.

We should recall that those who have asked us to rally to their cause by accusing others of being in the tax-and-spend camp have themselves spent, spent and spent again, while calling their indirect taxes "revenue enhancement." And that euphemism fell on those who could least afford it. And the trickle-down benefits, as my wife said, really turned out to be trickle-down poverty.

It should be apparent that the expensive media coverage bought by Steve Pierce is a good indication of which side he is on.

A vote for John Olver indicates a thoughtful vote.

LESTER J. CLARKE

South Lee Eagle 6-1-91

Lee seeks to fill committee openings

LEE — Town Moderator Joseph M. Toole is looking for three or four good men. Or women. Or both. They must be Lee voters because he wants them to serve on the town's nine-member Finance Committee, which has at least three vacancies.

Toole said the maximum term of office is three years, but some of the seats now vacant carry one-year and two-year as well as three-year terms. In slightly more than half the towns in the commonwealth, the moderator names the finance committee. Toole said persons interested in the appointments can telephone him at the Chambery Inn, 243-2221, or at his home, 243-0039.

Eagle 6-1-91

McCann bounced back in the fourth when Angie Bushika socked her first home run of the year, but Lee added single runs in the fifth and sixth innings to put the game away.

Yesterday's win puts several of these Wildcats in the rare position of playing for yet another county title, after winning the soccer championship in the fall and basketball crown in the winter.

"This is quite a group," said Wildcat coach Pete Warywoski. "We have five players from that soccer team and a number of players from that state championship basketball team. We have a lot of veterans and a lot of players like A.J. Skowron who have come through for us. We're very pleased with what we've done so far."

For Lee, Naventi had three hits

SOFTBALL, continued on C2

Questioning 'improvements'

Eagle 6-1-91

LEE

Why can't we just leave things alone? Why do we have to keep straightening things out, bulldozing them, paving them over, throwing them out before they're even dead or broken? Why do we have such a passion for making everything straight, flat and angular?

These thoughts were prompted by the seasonal surge of street and sidewalk repair projects here in the Berkshires. Whatever the construction project, most of us tend to assume it's all on the up-and-up. But the other day I began to wonder whether all of these projects were truly necessary.

At that point an old anecdote from the '50s popped into my mind. It seems some Yale University students, planning the ultimate practical joke, rented some jackhammers, shovels, pickaxes and "Danger Men Working" barricades. Then they drove into Manhattan, chose a random street, put up the barricades and started digging a hole. Thinking everything was legitimate, the police soon came to help direct traffic. Later, at quitting time, the students packed up their tools and drove away, leaving a gaping hole to generate massive bureaucratic confusion for weeks as those in power tried to figure out who ordered the hole dug and what to do with it.

Unlike the policemen in this anecdote, I have started asking questions. Outside my classroom at Berkshire Community College just last week, I bumped into a construction worker leaning on his shovel in a section of walkway that had just been torn up. Since I have never noticed anything wrong with the walk, I blurted out an

'What's going on here?'

astonished "What's going on here?"

He mumbled something like "too high" and pointed to what looked like a large drain pipe sticking up a few inches above the dirt. So I inferred the drain hadn't been working and was creating a safety hazard. But why hadn't I noticed it before, since I am both prone to tripping over things, yet generally quite observant? I conclude it had been a minor problem that could have been fixed a lot less expensively.

On a larger scale, down here in Lee, they're talking about replacing the Golden Hill Road bridge. Why? Because the current bridge, built in 1885 and eligible for listing on the National Registry of Historic Places, is not strong enough to carry large trucks and buses. One of the plans under consideration by the Selectmen and the state Department of Public Works is to move the present bridge somewhere else to be used as a footbridge and replace it with a modern bridge over the Housatonic.

But has anybody asked the people in the Golden Hill neighborhood whether they want to have large truck and bus traffic coming up that way to Golden Hill? It doesn't seem so. The plans seem to be already gathering a life of their own, the assumption being that newer and bigger is necessarily better.

Couldn't trucks and buses go around and access Golden Hill from Route 20 or from Walker Street in Lenox Dale? Just because it appears state and federal money is available for this bridge-moving/replacement project, does that mean we have to do it? Couldn't more pressing projects use the money?

Finally, there is the beauty of the bridge itself as it rests gently over the Housatonic River. According to the experts, it is most likely "the first pinned wrought-iron, lenticular pony-truss bridge" built in the state. Certainly, as a historical engineering rarity, it should not be destroyed.

But the rarity of this one-lane bridge goes deeper. For those who use Golden Hill Road as a "short cut," slowing down to a virtual halt as we cross the railroad tracks a few feet to the east, then creeping over the bridge itself; and for those of us who walk over the bridge and up to the lush, golden hill beyond, a new, more modern bridge would be totally out of place.

The curvilinear flow of the bridge lines, merged with the lines of the river, the tree lines and the rolling meadows on the hill beyond are all an integral part of the beauty of this spot.

Before a final decision is made on replacing the bridge, state and Lee officials would do well to talk with the residents of Golden Hill and visit the area with aesthetic, not just engineering, considerations in mind.

It is, after all, not just a bridge we're talking about. It's a beautiful, historic place. Let's save it if we can.

Hank Nadig is an advertising consultant and free-lance writer who lives in Lee.

Lee to turn over \$5,000 allocated for community TV

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The sum of \$5,000, sequestered in a town of Lee bank account for a year and a half, is evidently going to be turned over to Community Television of Southern Berkshire Inc. after all.

The Selectmen voted last week for release of the money to Community Television, but on condition that the town's Cable Television Committee concur and authorize the town treasurer to write the check.

The treasurer, Patricia D. Carlino, said this was the proper way to handle the matter. Although she had sat through a number of other discussions about Community Television and the \$5,000, she said it would have been irresponsible "to write out a check without proper authorization."

The Selectmen on Feb. 11 had voted that Community Television be the town's official representative for public-access television programming in the four-town region served by Century Berkshire Cable Television Corp.

However, there was no concurrent decision to turn over the \$5,000 to Community Television. The sum remained in the town treasury.

Bruce Kaiden, a member of Community Television as well as a member of the Lee Cable TV Committee, said the other three towns, Great Barrington, Lenox and Stockbridge, had or were going to turn over their \$5,000 allotments to Community Television.

The money originally came from Century Berkshire and was distributed in equal amounts of \$5,000 each to the four towns for purchase of television equipment. Community Television of Southern Berkshire was formed last fall to consolidate public-access television programming and production under one roof. One of its first acts was to ask each town to turn over the funds from Century Berkshire so that it could be pooled for economy of equipment purchases.

Lee has lagged in responding because of differing views over the original intent of the grants. School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski has argued that the grant was to be used by the Lee school system because Lee High School already has a television studio.

But Daniel Miller of Great Barrington, vice president of Community Television, argued that "no one's going to be locked out. We'll be present to advise users how to prepare programs and get them on the air. We're not going to censor anyone."

"Education is going to be an

important part of what we do," said Richard G. Houdek of Lenox, Community Television president. "Our hopes are to link curricular activities among schools." He said community television "would be a participatory medium for churches, schools, town meetings, candidates' forums, the arts."

One of the complaints among the towns served by Century Berkshire has been the lack of public programming on the company's public-access channel, Channel 11. In recent months, however, a few public officials have said Century Berkshire's present general manager, Philip Hopkins, has been encouraging and facilitating the transmission of community programs.

In other action last Tuesday, the Selectmen:

► Told William LaGrant and Donald Lucy, two businessmen who want to buy and reopen the former Tristany's Tavern at 232 Main St., that they will release a liquor license to them when the purchase has been made final. The Selectmen several weeks ago voted to grant the license but held it in abeyance until the partners could demonstrate that there was enough on-site parking to meet zoning regulations.

LaGrant's and Lucy's attorney, Don C. Hunter, said the recent change in the zoning bylaw, approved at the annual town meeting May 9, had reduced the square footage needed for individual cars so that all cars can now be accommodated on land that goes with the building. Under the old parking standards, they would have had to rent space from an entrepreneur across the street, a plan for which the Selectmen had little enthusiasm.

There was a momentary flare-up when Building Inspector Robert W. Lester said he required a parking plan before giving his approval. LaGrant said he had shown Lester such a plan and Lester had OK'd it. Lester said he favored diagonal rather than perpendicular parking because the space for cars to back out "looks awful tight to me."

"We'll stack them on top of each other if you want," said an exasperated Hunter before the Selectmen, after hearing a concurrent approval from the Planning Board, gave the contingent license release their blessing.

► Set 8 p.m. on Monday as the time for a meeting of town department representatives who will be expected to place budget-reduction plans on the table for review. Voters on May 13 killed a request for a \$255,000 override of the Proposition 2½ levy limit, necessitating new austerity measures.

Matters of life and death



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee visiting nurse Diane Carroll checks Kenneth Milligan's heart during her weekly visit to the house where he and his 88-year-old wife have lived for the past 50 years and where they hope to spend their last days.

Eagle
6-2-91

Living out life at home

With home care, elderly can stay where they want to

This is the fifth in a series of articles on how the elderly face the issues of technology vs. quality of life.

By Holly A. Taylor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — On a spring morning, the sighting of two deer creates a rush of excitement in the vine-covered cottage where Kenneth and Isabelle Milligan have lived for 50 years.

He is 85 and she is 88, and the Milligans don't know how much longer they'll live, but they live for moments like this.

From a bay window, Isabelle Milligan, who was paralyzed by a stroke two years ago, observes the deep pink buds of the peonies and the white blossoms on the mountain ash in her yard.

A retired agriculture teacher, Kenneth Milligan goes outside, aided by a walker and a hired homemaker, to tackle one daily task, such as planting morning glories, weeding flower beds or harvesting asparagus.

Many helpers

The Milligans were in and out of nursing homes and hospitals for a while and their health is deteriorating, but they intend to die at home. Their army of around-the-clock homemakers and aides have been

Medical Problems Of At-Home Elderly

These are the most frequently reported medical problems of noninstitutionalized elderly in Massachusetts.

PROBLEM	PERCENT
Arthritis	48%
Hypertension	39%
Impaired hearing	30%
Heart disease	28%
Orthopedic	17%

SOURCE: Mass. Executive Office of Elder Affairs

told not to call an ambulance if a heart attack strikes either of them.

Their situation is not unusual, according to health-care providers. Today's elderly, like the Milligans, are living longer and managing major illnesses. And many are determined to remain at home, where both

simple and sophisticated services are delivered to the doorstep.

Studies by the state Executive Office of Elder Affairs show that 25 percent or one out of four elderly people live alone and the majority, 61 percent, live with a spouse or relative.

This means that the life and death decisions, confined to hospitals and nursing homes in recent decades, are shifting to the home. Diane L. Carroll, a registered nurse with the Lee Visiting Nurse Association, said she frequently discusses "Do Not Resuscitate" orders, living wills and health-care proxies with her elderly clients and their families.

"A lot of times, you can feel it. Someone will make a gesture and say, 'I don't want to go back to the hospital' or 'I've lived too long,'" said Carroll. "Then you can ask them what they want. The information is put in their medical chart, and a doctor's order is signed."

Such decisions, she said, must be made clear so relatives understand that they should not call an ambulance crew, which is obligated to try to revive the patient. Carroll visits the Milligans once a week, and while they have made their desire clear, they have yet to put it in writing.

"Many people feel they've lived a good

HOME CARE, continued on A6

Most elderly choose to live out their days at home

■ HOME CARE, from A1

life and they don't want to be poked or probed in a hospital," said Carroll. "And then a lot of people aren't ready to talk about it."

The attachment to one's home cannot be underestimated, observed the Rev. Judith Mullen, pastor of the First Congregational Church in Hinsdale, who ministers to elderly residents as well as middle-age children who are caring for aging parents.

"There are a lot of good memories in the home. Even after a spouse dies, living alone in a place with memories is preferable to living in an institution," said Mullen.

"Some people would rather live with the possibility of falling at home than live in a nursing home. There is a powerful attachment," she said.

Money is problem

But money is a big issue. Few people can afford the kind of around-the-clock care the Milligans have. They receive about five hours of free care daily from the Lee VNA and hire private home health aides for the remaining 19 hours a day.

The state Medicaid program for the poor is seeking to use more home care and save nursing homes a last resort for frail elders, but the state has not provided additional funding for this effort.

A year in a nursing home can cost \$36,000, but, for example, an elderly person may be able to remain at home with 10 hours of home care a week, at a cost of roughly \$6,300 a year. Home health aides cost \$8 to \$10 an hour if hired privately and \$12 to \$15 an hour if hired through an agency, said Paula Schutzmann, director of the Lee VNA.

"The system is not ready for ongoing home care," said Catherine May, director of Elder Services of Berkshire County, a home-care agency. "The whole system is biased toward institutional care. If you get into a nursing home, then you will get care."

Elder Services has cut back its home-care services to only the most needy now, she said. Medicare will cover skilled nursing care, May said, but there is not enough money to help all the elderly who really need it with daily chores like dressing, bathing and preparing meals.

After a major lawsuit, Medicare has eased its guidelines for VNAs, said Schutzmann. Agencies were nervous about providing major care for which they would not be compensated, and Medicare said it would only cover acutely ill patients and not seven days a week.

"There is no provision for chronic ailments, and a VNA needs to document that this person would end up in a hospital without this care," said Schutzmann.

Figures from the Congressional Budget Office show that Medicare expects to increase its spending for home care from \$3.5 billion to \$5.5 billion by 1996, but those numbers may reflect the increase in the elderly population, not necessarily an increase in services.

Seventy percent of the Lee VNA's 154 elderly clients are 80 years old or older, while only 2 percent are in their 60s and 28 percent are in their 70s. According to a state study, the most frequent medical problems among those at home are ar-



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

With a visiting nurse coming twice a day, seven days a week, Margaret 'Peg' Healy can be at home instead of in a nursing home. She says there's 'no give-up' in

her, and she'll soon be out walking with her grandchildren, 15-month-old Jessica, left, and Kaitlyn Healy, 3, of Lenox Dale.

'I'd rather die here than go into a nursing home again. This is where I've lived for 50 years.'

thritis, high blood pressure, hearing impairment, heart disease and orthopedic impairments.

Besides sending in homemakers and aides to help people with simple chores, the Lee VNA also has nurses like Carroll who can perform tasks not previously done at home.

Many ordeals survived

For example, Carroll or another nurse visits Margaret "Peg" Healy, 64, of Lee twice a day, seven days a week. Healy jokes that she is a walking textbook of "medical history." She has survived a stroke, quadruple heart bypass surgery, leg vein bypass surgery, a minor heart attack and the amputation of a toe because of poor circulation.

Healy lives with two of her children. Another is only a block away, but the VNA sends in a physical therapist and a nurse who changes the dressing on her foot where the toe was amputated and

draws blood twice a week to be checked for any thickening that could clog her arteries.

"There's no give-up in me," says Healy. "I'm going to keep fighting until I get better and I can walk up the block with my granddaughters."

Her children understand what Healy expects from medicine today. She would want to be resuscitated and rushed to the hospital if she had a heart attack, but she has signed a living will opposing

life-support machines. And she wants to die at home, rather than enter a nursing home.

"I don't want to be a burden, but when it's time the good Lord will take me and put me in heaven with my husband," said Healy.

In both the Healy and Milligan homes are all the standard equipment of today's frail elderly — hospital beds, walkers, commodes and emergency call buttons.

Plenty of equipment

Isabelle Milligan uses a wheelchair and has a hospital bed with a Hoyer lift, while her husband has a walker, two hearing aids and a "Lifeline" call button tucked in his shirt pocket.

"I'd rather die here than go into a nursing home again," says Kenneth Milligan. "This is where I've lived for 50 years. But I don't think too much about

'You go from being an alive, independent person to becoming aware that you're going to die.'

the future. Isabelle says I talk too much about the past, and I should live for today."

A Lifeline button dangles on a crimson ribbon around the neck of 85-year-old Susan Ferrentino of Great Barrington. Nearly three years ago, Ferrentino fell in her apartment and was helpless on the kitchen floor for 10 hours. Her hip was broken.

"I said to myself, 'Oh Sue, have an idea.' Then I pulled the [telephone] receiver down and began banging it and my neighbor came over at 5 a.m. and saw me on the floor and called for help," said Ferrentino.

What followed were two years in the hospital, a nursing home and her daughter's home. Now she moves around her apartment with a walker and checks in regularly with her daughter. A home-health aide comes once a week to help her bathe.

Nursing home patients today are older, sicker, more fragile

This is the sixth in a series of articles on how the elderly face the issues of technology vs. quality of life.

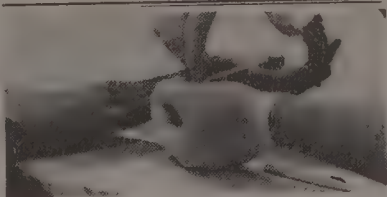
By Holly A. Taylor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — At the bedside of 82-year-old Monicue Hygh, Mae Brown knows instinctively when to raise a water glass to her brother's lips or to rub his hands when they jerk with muscle spasms.

Brown reads the Bible and chats with Hygh, who continues to tease his sister good-naturedly during her daily visits to Berkshire Hills North nursing home.

Progressive problems since a stroke in 1982 have left Hygh bedridden with contractures — a tightening of the ligaments — and dependent upon a stomach

Matters of Life and Death



feeding tube for enough nourishment to sustain his 140-pound body.

In the health-care field, Hygh is what is known as "a full Mayday." He wants to be treated aggressively if he has a heart attack or a life-threatening illness, and his sister is his advocate.

"He knows he was born to die like everyone else," said Brown. "But I didn't bring him

life so I don't feel I can take it away. My brother is my brother and as long as I live, I will give him my all."

Minds and bodies

On another wing at Berkshire Hills, 62-year-old Ann Porter of Pittsfield is resting in bed, a baby doll tucked in her arms.

Porter has Alzheimer's disease and her daughter, Peggy Cullett of Peru, signed a "Do Not Resuscitate" order three months ago after much soul-searching by the family.

"I pray my mother's heart lets her pass away peacefully in her sleep and that she does not die of Alzheimer's, which is a terrible death," said Cullett.

The stories of Hygh and Porter cross the spectrum — he has his mind, but not his health; she has her health, but

not her mind.

Hygh decided in favor of aggressive treatment, sparing his sister any second-guessing. Porter can't decide herself, forcing her family to decide for her. But they believe Porter would not want to prolong a life like this.

Brown and Cullett are taking different paths, but they have cleared common hurdles, the same obstacles that loom before many other families today.

They traveled the exhausting route of caring for a loved one at home. They had to confront the need for nursing home care, and they had to face the life-and-death issues posed by a medically advanced society.

"There are more chronically ill residents because people are

■ NURSING, from A1

living longer," said Marcia Bush, director of nursing at Berkshire Hills.

"They're developing illnesses and surviving. The technology is there, such as feeding tubes for stroke victims."

"Ten years ago, a patient wouldn't have survived the stroke to begin with," added Paul Chernov, owner and administrator of Berkshire Hills.

Hygh, for example, had a stroke in 1982 and Porter underwent triple bypass surgery for heart trouble in 1983.

People entering a nursing home today are older, sicker and frailer than ever before, said Chernov.

Of the 75 residents at Berkshire Hills, Chernov said, 53 residents, or 70 percent, are 80 or older. Those 90 or older total 22 or 30 percent of the residents. Twelve residents, or 16 percent, have Alzheimer's, which was not commonly diagnosed 15 years ago.

Involving families

Bush said nursing homes, partly because of regulations, are trying to involve families more in the care plans and that involvement helps ease the guilt.

At Hillcrest, Thompson works with families when an elderly patient requires a nursing home and sees the mixed emotions.

"It's a fear of the unknown. There are new people in a new system, a separation from the past, coupled with the dependency cause by failing health and a fear of death," said Thompson.

Thompson advises families to visit nursing homes and to look beyond fancy furnishings. Are there signs of life? Are people out of their rooms and in the halls and community rooms? Are the men shaved and the women groomed?

"Do they have dining rooms that look like they can be used by the residents, and are there real activities and not simply busy time?" suggests Thompson.

"I like to see activities that are work for the staff, such as taking residents on a camping trip, packing them into a car and going to the high school play or having a dance with a band and flower corsages for the women."

Lee resident Mary O'Brien, 76, made her own decision to enter Berkshire Hills four years ago because she could not find and keep good home-care workers, even though she had the money to pay for them.



Mary O'Brien, 76, of Lee entered the nursing home because she couldn't find home-care workers. She suffers complications from a hip replacement.

Federal-style house remodeled as shop, home

By Mary-Jane Tichenor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Daniel B. and Robyn Soules have a new home for themselves and their business, Lakeside Rug & Carpet Outlet.

Lakeside Rug & Carpet, started by the couple 5½ years ago on Route 20 next door to the Black Swan Inn, has moved closer to town, to Center Street, next door to the quilt store and just up from Kentucky Fried Chicken.

The couple have bought a large, blue-gray, 1812 Federal-style house with 13-plus rooms from May and Mary McCauley for \$99,000 and estimate that they have spent an additional \$30,000 to \$35,000 in repairs. They obtained a mortgage from Lee Savings Bank.

The Souleses have restored the downstairs, with original tin ceilings and fireplaces, to accommodate their business, painted the walls white with a blue trim, installed new fixtures and turned a small room into a playroom with books and crayons for customers' children. The couple live on the second floor.

Each year the business has grown, Daniel Soules said. "Last year, we had a 20 percent increase in sales over 1989."

Major mills represented

The store carries carpets from major mills, such as Salem and Mohawk, and, Soules said, all of the major linoleum companies — Armstrong, Mannington, Domco. Domco, the oldest floor covering manufacturer in North America, comes from Canada, and pretty much is exclusive in this area with Lakeside, he said.

The store has braided rugs from five manufacturers and many handmade rugs. There are original Oriental rugs from China, India, Pakistan, Persia and Turkey.

Because he deals directly with importers and cuts out the middleman, Soules said, he can offer attractive prices. He showed a Chinese hand-carved wool rug, 8 by 10 feet, for \$649.

"We sell an awful lot of these," he said.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Daniel and Robyn Soules have combined home and business in an 1812 house in Lee.

The store also carries Oriental-style rugs and is a distributor for Beaulieu of America. Beaulieu, said Soules, is one of the largest manufacturers of yarn in the world, and some of the rugs come from Belgium.

The store has a large selection of tiles and marble-like tiles. "Ceramic tiles seem to be big this year, especially with second-home owners," he said. The store is also selling a lot of Stainmaster carpet and a new frieze, a twist that doesn't show footprints or vacuum marks as most carpets do.

The Souleses employ part-time help and two or three full-time installers, one of whom has been laying carpet for more than 40 years. The store also will do binding.

A Lee native, Daniel Soules

graduated from Lee High School in 1976 and has attended classes at Berkshire Community College. He was a cabinetmaker and finisher at Hancock Shaker Village before starting his own business.

His wife, the former Robyn Parizo, was born in Bennington,

Vt., moved to Lenox and graduated from Lenox High School in 1979. She also has attended classes at BCC and formerly was in retail sales in the Lenox area.

The store is open Monday through Saturday from 9 to 5 and by appointment.

Lee Central School lists honor roll for third period

LEE — Of 225 students enrolled at Lee Central School, 102 have been named to the honor roll for the third marking period. Of the total, 39 students attained high honors and 63 attained honors.

To achieve high honors a student must have A's or better in major subjects; for honors, B's or better in all major subjects. No mark may be below a B- in minor subjects in either case.

High honors

Grade 8: Megan Bachteler, Kristen Coty, Richard Guidice, Stephen Guidice, Christopher Tisdale, Todd Tyer, Sarah Walsh and Stephanie Wescott.

Grade 7: Kirsten Barnatchz, Joshua Crawford, Timothy DiMario, Joseph Dinan, Jonathan Geldert, Cecily Gould, April Hubbard, Mandee Kelly, Jason Kokoszka, Kelly Loring, James Moffatt and Marni Nicholas.

Grade 6: Kristina Brock, John Mitchell, Katherine O'Neil, Kristen Scheurer, Brendan Walsh and Jessica Wilcox.

Grade 5: Kate Bailey, Erika Baluk, Jennifer Brittain, Thomas Felten, Amanda Hess, Amy Hunt, Michael Kalinowski, Adrienne Lavallo, Jennifer O'Neill, Kerry Schuerer, Sarah Towne, Avi Verdi and Peter Wise.

non Plaquet, Nina Pixley, Jaime Rauch, Daryl Roberts, Michael Rocke, Patricia Schwab, Michael Spalinger, Tammy Touponce and Shannon Williams.

Grade 6: Emily Borsody, Sarah Bunnell, Cristina Consolati, Kelly Doherty, Dawn Donnelly, Mindy Drury, Sarah Fix, Alan Hebert, Patti Hedge, Jesse Horsford, Benjamin Hunter, Dana Korn, Gregory Krupka, Titus Logsdon, Kristopher McDonough, John Palmer, Stephanie Roosa, Harmony Shaw and Scott Walker.

Grade 5: Christine Bissell, Nicholas Boldyga, Robin Cody, Jeffrey Guidice, Matthew Kelly, Terry Lorange, Jodi Pixley and Nicole Smith.

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Grade 8: Joseph Abderhalden, Jamie Bartini, Christopher Brittain, Christine Cinella, Jonathan Cohen, Lori Curtin, Carrie Gangell, Amy Goebel, Joseph Impoco, Maureen Kennedy, Tamara Miles, Mark Mitchell, Thomas Scheurer, Eric Schneider, Stephen Seward, Rina Verdi and Mark Walker.

Grade 7: Kurt Baluk, Sean Burt, Regina Brazee, Jennifer Felten, Gina Impoco, Jennifer Kilmer, Jonathan LaGrant, Tabitha Martin, Peter Montgomery, Vaishali Patel, Shan-

Scarpa gets two Lee posts, ending long-running dispute

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Selectmen approved on Tuesday the appointment of Suzanne T. Scarpa of Pleasant Street as assistant town treasurer, an action that appears to end a dispute that had generated clashes among town officials and resulted in the elimination of a secretarial job.

Scarpa's appointment, on a 2-1 vote, gave her a second hat to wear, because she had already been appointed assistant town clerk the same day by the town's elected clerk, Patricia D. Carlino.

State law gives town clerks authority to appoint assistants, but calls for Selectmen's approval of assistant treasurer appointments.

Carlino is also the town treasurer and had nominated Scarpa for the assistant's job as well.

Selectman Joseph F. Dupont cast the dissenting vote. Selectmen Diane P. Roosa and Martin H. Deely were in favor of the appointment.

It seems to settle, at least temporarily, a dispute that erupted last winter over the appointment of an interdepartmental clerk to assist Carlino, who was then the assistant clerk and treasurer, and Town Auditor Mary Lou Dadak. Carlino said she needed a full-time assistant.

Walsh hired

After advertising the job, the Selectmen appointed Patricia A. Walsh of Pittsfield. Just beforehand, Carlino, who had become acting town treasurer because of the retirement of town clerk and treasurer John J. Nagle, had named Scarpa to the assistant's post in the belief that it was the prerogative of the treasurer to do so.

The dust seemed to settle then, but the annual town meeting May 9 killed the \$15,395 salary for the interdepartmental post for next year, at the same time approving

the same salary for an assistant clerk-treasurer.

Walsh, divining that she was out of a job, subsequently submitted a letter to the Selectmen, asking for a report on her job status. She was "shocked," she said, by comments she had heard at the town meeting, where, among other things, she was called the "outsider from Pittsfield."

"Had I not attended the town meeting, no one would have discussed the problem with me," she wrote. She said the job was an "eye-opener," revealing a "political network in the town that is allowed to discriminate against 'outsiders.'"

She said she had performed her duties to the best of her abilities without training from Carlino, although Carlino disputed the charge.

Walsh went on a three-week medical leave a week ago, and Carlino told the Selectmen Tuesday she understood Walsh would not return. Carlino said she was dismayed by the whole matter and felt that Walsh had got caught in a dispute between her and the previous Board of Selectmen that was eventually rendered moot by the town meeting.

The Selectmen did issue one caveat Tuesday night about Scarpa's appointment. In light of the defeat by town voters of a Proposition 2½ tax-levy override on May 13, there is no guarantee, they said, that there will be any funds to pay her salary after July 1.

Lee officials whittle accounts in hopes of averting override

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — With a nickel here, a dime there and a few thousand bucks somewhere else — including half the proposed salary for the town's first professional administrator — town officials last night chopped next year's budget back to a point where an override of the tax limit evidently won't be necessary.

They think.

There are still some figures, or factors, whose exact dollar values are unknown, like the amount of state aid and the amount of money that can be removed, for one example, from the town's insurance liability trust fund. These sums will have a bearing on the outcome.

But if there are no major surprises, the \$255,000 override of the Proposition 2½ levy limit that was approved by the annual town meeting May 9 but then resoundingly defeated by voters in the annual election five days later can be shelved for the fiscal year starting July 1, the officials agreed.

"If we can live with these cuts, I don't see the need for an override," said John E. DeVarennes, who informed the Selectmen that he had just been named chairman of the Finance Committee, succeeding Robert B. Trask, who resigned.

The Selectmen, DeVarennes, other members of the Finance Committee and representatives from most of the town's departments met in the central hallway of the Airolti Building last night to begin the cutting process.

Substantial progress

They moved further than they initially thought they would.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa had called for the meeting two weeks ago in the wake of the town election and the override rejection so that department heads would submit voluntary cuts. She and a few others, including DeVarennes and Selectman Martin H. Deely, appeared to believe it would only be the first such session. They expected others to follow.

Some of them also expected there might have to be one or two special town meetings and elections if overrides continued to be needed.

Even so, there will have to be a formal meeting of the Selectmen and Finance Committee to formalize a new budget. And there

will have to be another town meeting to approve it. The date won't be set until the new budget is finalized, which in turn will depend on when the state's final financial-aid figures come in, probably at the end of June.

And DeVarennes said that even without an override, the tax rate will go up, possibly by as much as 65 cents for each \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Cuts ranged from \$275 in tax collector's expenses to \$12,325 in part-time personnel accounts in the Police Department.

The \$45,000 sum approved May 9 for a town administrator was halved to \$22,500 on grounds that it would take six months to hire one.

Assessors Chairman Edward M. Briggs called for eliminating the administrator's salary altogether. "I think we could sacrifice it for one more year," he said.

Capital projects cut

Some small capital projects were cut: painting at the South Lee firehouse, \$2,500; painting at the Central Fire Station, \$10,000; painting Lee High School, \$15,000, and replacing one of the roofs at Lee Central School, either \$33,900 or \$45,200, depending on the roof.

Insurance costs, said DeVarennes, can be cut by perhaps as much as \$120,000, but this will depend on negotiating the share of insurance costs that might be borne by town employees and on how much money may be taken from the insurance liability trust fund that was set up when Lee was a self-insurer.

Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo said \$65,000 allocated to road-improvement work could be borrowed rather than raised and appropriated from taxes because eventually it will be reimbursed by the state.

Elimination of the override was an appropriate goal, suggested Tax Collector Janice G. Smith. "People are having trouble paying their taxes," she said. "It's worse this year than last year."



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Carol Marino, chairman of the Lee Historical Commission, with iron bridge that is the oldest of its type in the state.

Move under way in Lee to preserve historic iron bridge built in 1885

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The old iron bridge that carries Golden Hill Road over the Housatonic River north of town, the oldest bridge of its type in the commonwealth, may soon be put figuratively out to pasture to become a bridge for pedestrians only.

At least that's what a number of residents who live in its vicinity told the Selectmen recently would be its proper fate. They spoke at the end of a lengthy review by state and town officials of efforts over the past 5½ years to replace or restore the bridge.

Damaged by flooding

It has been damaged in floods and its load limit reduced to 5 tons, said Lee Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo, whose request to the state Department of Public Works in January 1986 for a new bridge resulted in its being placed 338th on a state priority list.

But until its ultimate disposition can be nailed down, progress toward a permanent solution to the problem of an old bridge too narrow for modern traffic will be held up, state officials indicated.

For one thing, there is a question whether the bridge would remain where it is or be moved to another site.

It probably won't be demolished, said Ross B. Dindio, the highway engineer for the state DPW's Berkshire district, not with its historic character and eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Up to the town

But in light of policy enunciated by the commonwealth's new public works commissioner, James J. Kerasiotes, Dindio said that its ultimate disposition lies completely with the town of Lee.

"It's your project," he said. "You tell us what you want to do."

It was clear at a recently Selectmen's meeting that townspeople want the old iron bridge saved. Carol Marino, chairman of the Lee Historical Commission, said the commission would prefer that it be moved to the Lee High School property, where it could serve as a footbridge across Barnes Brook, connecting athletic fields.

But in any event, she said it should be preserved as a pedestrian bridge, blocked to vehicular

The Historical Commission would like the bridge moved to the Lee High School property to be used as a footbridge over Barnes Brook.

traffic. She said she would confer with the Massachusetts Historical Commission to determine if there is grant money available for some aspect of preservation.

Residents in the vicinity of the bridge have other views. "I don't see why it needs to be replaced," said William J. Brighenti, who lives above the bridge on Golden Hill Road.

"Buses will never go up there," he said, speaking of school buses climbing steep Golden Hill from the east, or bridge, end.

"You would save a lot of money," he said, apparently referring to the savings that would accrue to the town and the state if the bridge remained standing and was not demolished or moved.

It took a question from Planning Board Chairman Robert W. Birch for Brighenti to make it clear he wanted the one-lane, 106-year-old bridge converted to a footbridge.

'Historic value'

"Aesthetically, the way the bridge is designed is part of its historic value," said Henry D. Nadig, who lives on nearby Washington Mountain Road. He said he likes to walk along Golden Hill Road, and the bridge is a familiar and attractive element of the surroundings.

Brighenti, Nadig and others rallied to the bridge's tentative defense after the Selectmen and members of the Planning Board, Historical Commission and Conservation Commission talked of its future with Dindio and the district's projects engineer, Edwin S. Taginski.

The latter pair said, in effect, that the state is the servant of the town. If the town wants nothing done, then the state DPW will use its funds for other projects, Dindio said.

But if the town wants a new bridge, it should decide the fate of the old one, either moving it and putting a new one in its place or leaving it in its present position and constructing a bridge just downstream from it.

The combination of the Kerasiotes policy and a fast-track construction program being proposed to the Federal Highway Administration by the commonwealth should simplify and speed the entire process from design through construction, said Dindio.

No overkill

If a new bridge is to be built, it will not be a copy of the old iron one, he and Taginski said, but it would not be overkill, either.

"It's a brand-new concept," said Dindio, describing the proposal for simplifying bridge and related construction projects that do not affect primary or main-traveled roads.

"In the old days, we came in and said this is it, this is what we'll build: two 12-foot lanes, 10-foot shoulders, sidewalks, the whole works.

"Now, what we say is we can replace what was there with something equivalent."

In the case of Golden Hill Road, the new bridge would have two lanes instead of one, but it would not necessarily have the 10-foot shoulders, sidewalks and other additions common in the past.

No cost estimates have been made. Taginski said it is still too early for these. Besides, the town's decision, for example, to call for a new bridge downstream from the present one would require that the town buy rights of way on either side of the river for the new approaches. The total would be about one-third of an acre, he said.

He gave Selectmen and others at the meeting last week copies of layout drawings showing a new bridge where the present one is and a bridge downstream. And while he was explaining the drawings, he said the downstream version would be longer than one built in place of the old one,

necessitating two spans instead of one.

"Two short spans are a lot less costly than one long one," said Taginski.

Mid-river pier

But there would have to be a pier in the middle of the river, and Joseph Castronova, chairman of the town's Board of Public Works, said he would rather not see it there. It would catch debris, he said.

But the erecting of one span instead of two might double the project cost, Dindio said.

According to Taginski, the diagonal bracing under the old bridge has been "deformed" because of floating debris during storms and thaws. In addition, he said, its abutments and approaches are in poor condition.

Built in 1885, the bridge is the oldest of five lenticular pony-truss bridges in the state. It is held together with wrought-iron pins instead of rivets or bolts, said Taginski. In 1970, its deck was replaced with grating and its deck supports with steel beams.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa said the Planning Board, local DPW, Fire Department and Conservation and Historical commissions will be asked to submit recommendations to the Selectmen as soon as possible so the town's final choice can be made.

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walkabout

By
Deidre Consolati



THERE WAS A FIRE IN LEE two weeks ago that turned a large warehouse and millions of dollars worth of recycled paper into a "fireball." That was how Irene and Philip Audet of High Street described it; they were among the first to arrive at the scene. Apparently a hot metal bolt and window bracket heated by a workman's torch fell into a pile of paper and ignited. The fire subsequently destroyed the 17,000-foot wood and aluminum building and its multimillion dollar contents.

The blaze was one of those rare yet cataclysmic events in local history that draws humanity like a magnet to witness (yet one more time) the fierce unleashing of one of nature's elements — this time, fire.

In a drama with similar overtones, Lee residents flocked to High Lawn Farm in 1953 when a red glow visible from hillsides for miles around told that a fire was out of control. There, the heifer barn was fully engaged. Townspeople pitched in with Lee firefighters to pull the animals from underneath the burning framework. "That was a fire that could have been a lot worse," recalled owner Col. H. George Wilde, "We lost 12 to 15 heifers that night. They were all in stanchions [stalls] and we had to try and release them. The building fell on some." And, he said, there was a lesson learned from that night, "quite a night": don't stanchion your animals, don't put them in barns where they are tied. "After that unforgettable fire," he said, "we put up large, open housing for them. If they need to get out, they'll go through the doors."

Some Lee boys in their early teens were among the townspeople who gave Col. Wilde a hand, and the experience shaped them. Lending a hand, wide-eyed, were Franny Arment of High Street, Bub and Skip Whalen of Prospect Street and Robert McIntyre of Center Street. Bobby later served for years as a Lee volunteer fireman.

ANOTHER FIRE THAT LOOMS LARGE in local memory is that of Shadowbrook, a Jesuit novitiate which burned in a massive conflagration during one evening in 1956. (The rebuilt building is today the Kripalu Center of Health.) The massive stone structure was a Berkshire landmark and a visual delight, recalling castle architecture of the European tradition. Hundreds of townspeople watched from the foot of the hill as, in the dark night, the fire lit and silhouetted each symmetrical angle and tower and served as its epitaph. Frank McCarthy of Navin Heights in Lee, now a retired newspaperman, covered the dramatic blaze for the *Eagle*.

"I remember thinking that the whole damn thing went up very quietly. It burned like a torch," he said. "As I recall, the origin of the fire was thought to be in the wiring and it spread quickly throughout the huge building. It was full of young people, seminarians, and each of them had a cubicle."

Tragically, four priests perished in the blaze. According to McCarthy, a new rector, Father Cochran, had been appointed a few weeks before, and he had interviewed him. "That evening," he said, "he was the guy I looked for. Eventually I found him, standing by the pine trees, calmly watching." The unfolding events were entirely out of his hands. When queried, McCarthy said, "He coolly pointed out that we all die at some point, that the Lord calls everyone at some time in life."

He concluded, "The fire was unfortunate for two reasons. One, because the Jesuits lost four priests and a building of great beauty. And two, they were forced to spend \$4 million on a replacement because there were still novices to train." But most unfortunate, he observed, it turned out they had built something they didn't need, for what followed in the church was the Second Vatican Council's historic overhaul of traditions and teachings. "Subsequently, the bottom fell out of the seminarian business. That marked the end for Shadowbrook."

Like the Jesuits of Shadowbrook and H. George Wilde of High Lawn, the owner of the Lee warehouse plans to rebuild. Frederick G. Mercer Jr. of Housatonic stated in reports that the building was partially insured and that he would be constructing another. As an event of magnitude, that conflagration, like the other two, was viewed in awe by many people. It was fed by hundreds of rolls of pastel-colored decorative laminating paper that changed in hue to gray, white and black.

The powerful drama of fires and peoples' attempts to bring them under control is a familiar and evocative experience. Essentially, it is the primal confrontation between humanity and the elements. And the pull for all of us, young and old, is to relive that confrontation yet one more time. For deep within each of us lies the memory of our ancestors' elemental struggles, waged time and again, and their exquisite triumph which lives on in our own beating hearts.

Heather Browne says her generation can make a difference in globe's future

Heather Browne plans to attend Northeastern University in Boston in September. An academic achiever at Lee High School, Principal Richard Salinetti credits Browne with convincing him to do more to publicly recognize academic excellence in the same way athletic excellence is applauded.

Browne will hold two part-time jobs this summer and will pay her way through college with the help of some scholarships. She is a member of Lee's National Honor Society, was editor of the yearbook this year, and has served on several school committees. She aspires to be a diplomat and is interested in the environment. Some of her observations follow:

"It's so frustrating when I see older people who don't care about the environment. They leave the lights on. They leave the TV on. I think people are starting to do things like recycling and composting. It's frustrating because a lot of kids are apathetic about recycling. We had an Earth Day last year and maybe 10 kids and a couple of teachers got involved. It's frustrating when the teachers don't get involved. The kids see that as an example and it doesn't help things at all. It's always the same teachers who get involved."

"Kids are starting to be more aware than they were before. It's too late now to just stop. We can't just keep putting it off. We have to start dealing with important issues. AIDS has become much more of an epidemic. The environment is a problem; there are landfill problems, pollution, acid rain. All these things have come to a crisis proportion so we have to do something. I don't think too many people in my class will join the Peace Corps but I think that kids in their own way are going to do something."

"Now everybody recycles. A year ago no one recycled. Now everyone recycles because it's the things to do. I'm hoping things like that will start happening. Things like that and showing up at town meetings and making their voice be heard. I think that maybe the tide is starting to turn. I'm



Heather Browne

glad it's my generation that's doing something.

Tougher educational times

"A lot of kids now want to go to better schools but they can't because they can't get the financial aid. It's not harder to get into schools. It's harder to pay for them now, but a lot of my friends are going to UMass."

Making a difference

"I hope I can make a difference. I think I have in little things. At my school there was no program recognizing students for academic accomplishments so I wrote an article in the school newspaper about it. Next year, after I'm gone, they're going to start a new program. They never made a big deal about an honor roll or anything but now they're trying to show that people who did well academically are awarded immediately. Athletes get awarded immediately. People cheer them at games and they get letters. But if you're smart the class doesn't cheer for you when you get a 100 on a test. People think then you're just a brain. That's changing."

Garrity gets special permit

After weeks of discussion and disharmony, the Lee Selectmen approved construction of six apartments at West Park Street Monday night.

The unanimous vote was made despite objections by Selectman Joseph F. DuPont that the plan violates the town's requirement that there be 5,000 square feet of open space for each apartment.

Developer Thomas R. Garrity angrily objected to DuPont's concerns, saying that DuPont is biased against the proposal. "No project in town has 5,000 square feet per apartment," Garrity said Monday.

"I can't vote for it because of overcrowding and public safety concerns," DuPont responded. "I would like to have the town's procedures followed. Not done backwards."

DuPont eventually changed his mind after Garrity said that he was the only person in town holding up the project which would provide both low-cost housing and badly needed jobs. The selectmen set conditions with the special permit that the apartments only be used for residential purposes and that Garrity clean up lumber at the property.

Variance given for Tristany building in downtown Lee

The Lee Zoning Board of Appeals has granted a variance for the Locker Room waiver for a new sports bar and restaurant, The Locker Room, at the Tristany building, 232 Main St. Owners William LaGrant and Donald Lucy expect to open the new business later this summer.

LaGrant and Lucy anticipate renovating the interior and exterior of the building for the restaurant which will serve more than 70 people. The selectmen have already granted a liquor license.

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Another house in south county schools' notch

The enormously successful southern Berkshire schools' housebuilding program formally racked up another success story last week when they held an open house for its latest creation. Instructor John Reilley says the building at the corner of Via Maria and Via Lia in Lee marks the 14th home built by the program and the ninth one sponsored by the Kiwanis Club in Lee.

"If someone told me that I'd take 27 kids and build a home in my 40s I don't know that I'd believe him," Reilley says.

But that is what Reilley and his 27 students did this year when they completed construction of a four-bedroom, two-story Cape Cod-style home with a garage. The asking price for the house is \$153,000.

Gerald LeProvost, owner of Henry's Electric in Lee and a member of the Kiwanis Club, says the program has become a model for the state in construction programs. Henry's Electric assisted the students with the electric work.

The program has proven to be a training ground for area contractors, plumbers and electricians. Provost says he has hired four people from the program. "They learn a lot here," he said during the open house.

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Lee cuts, cuts, cuts town government services

School budget is untouched; hiring administrator delayed

By Erik Bruun

Lee residents should expect fewer services from town government this year.

After scrimping, saving and skimming off the top of their expenses, Lee town officials say they may have come up with a town budget that will fall within the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2.

While the financial cost of the new budget may not exceed the limits of Proposition 2 1/2, town officials say there will be a price to pay in lost services. Town reports may no longer be delivered to people's homes, cuts in part-time police may be made and several capital projects could be postponed.

"People have to know that the town has to make cuts somewhere. They have to know the choices," says Finance Committee Chairman John DeVarenes.

But after a lengthy meeting between town department heads Monday night in which cuts large and small were considered, DeVarenes says the town may be able to trim its \$8.5 million budget within the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2. Residents at the annual election voted by a 3-to-1 margin against a request to override Proposition 2 1/2.

DeVarenes and the Lee Selectmen say they will review the proposed cuts from department heads and make a final decision on what to do later this month. He says the town may raise many of its user fees.

Uncertainty looms

Looming in the background, however, is the fear that if the state cuts its local aid to the town either more cuts would have to be made in the town budget or another request for an override will be sought.

"We can't make a commitment until the state numbers are available," DeVarenes says, "everything could change then."

In the meantime, officials will ponder the wide range of proposed cuts in the budget. Suggestions from department heads ranged from trimming \$125 in expenses for the veteran's agent, to \$500 for the dog officer, to \$3,900 for a part-time clerk in the assessor's office, to \$12,312 in the police department.

In almost all cases, department heads say they are working with budgets that are very tight. Cuts will mean fewer services in some cases. Police Chief Edward Finnegan says he made some "pretty agonizing decisions" in recommending his cuts and that the public will not like them. One town official says the police department may eliminate a school-crossing guard position.

Town Clerk/Treasurer Patricia Carlino says a \$10,000

cut in her budget would include eliminating home-delivery service to every home in Lee. Instead of printing 2,500 copies of the town report, the town would print 1,000 and make them available in public places. The cut would require a change in the town's bylaws.

Administrator, DPW on cutting block

Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo says the town could erase more than \$35,000 in DPW capital projects. Selectmen suggested eliminating a \$10,000 item to paint the town firehouse even though Scolforo says that expense has been postponed for five years.

The selectmen say they will postpone hiring a town administrator for six months, creating a savings of \$22,500. "We're not above looking at our own pet projects," says Selectman Martin Deely.

Town officials remain divided on the merit of hiring a town administrator during such tight fiscal times. While several town officers say the town can struggle forward for a while without a town administrator, others say that not only did voters approve the position at the town election but also that the town is in desperate need of full-time professional management skills.

DeVarenes says the biggest savings can be made in

some of the town's insurance funds. Although Selectman Chairman Diane Roosa says the town Insurance Committee has recommended against spending excess insurance fund money, Roosa says the town needs the money now. Between the insurance money and cuts in the town's stabilization fund, DeVarenes says the town can save as much as \$130,000 or more in the budget.

While several department heads willingly cut their budgets, others say they do not have a dollar to spare. Building Inspector Robert Lester says he does not have enough money to pay for certified letters.

School Superintendent Henry Zukowski says the school department cannot cut its \$4.3 million operating budget, although it will postpone one or two capital projects to save \$25,000 to \$30,000. "Our budget was absolutely bare bones," says Zukowski, who adds that he is still in the midst of negotiations with teachers. "For each dollar that is taken out of our budget, where do we get it when we reach a settlement with the union?"

The school department's reluctance to cut, however, prompted cries of unfairness from the selectmen. "The School Department's got to be a player in this," Selectman Joseph DuPont told the other selectmen, who agreed with him. "It's not fair for all the other departments to do this without the schools being a part of it."

Lee collector sees reasons for tax revolt

Tax collectors, since the days of Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham, are supposed to be cruel, callous and unsympathetic to the plight of taxpayers.

But in Lee, Tax Collector Janice G. Smith has emerged as a defender of the taxpayer.

A witness to the financial struggles of Lee property owners, Smith opposes attempts by the town to raise the town's levy limit imposed by the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2.

"I voted against the override," Smith says. "I don't think the people can afford to pay more taxes even if it will affect the people here at Town Hall."

Smith says Lee taxpayers have been hit hard in the last several months. Not only has the tax rate increased this year, but also, because the tax assessments were late last year, the town has sent three tax bills for fiscal 1990 and 1991 in the last seven months.

"That's a lot more frequent than people are used to," Smith says. "Mortgages are high. Food bills are up. Insurance is up. Federal and state taxes are due this time of year. Unemployment is up. Pretty soon it all catches up to you."

Voters at the annual town election in May voted by a 3-to-1 margin against raising the town's tax levy limit by \$255,000. Town officials are now struggling to find ways to cut the existing budget and are considering asking for another override of Proposition 2 1/2, this time by a lesser amount.

While the elderly on fixed incomes have had to juggle Social Security checks to make tax payments, younger working families have been hit by the deteriorating unemployment. Smith says she has seen an increase in the number of people who are making partial payments, are late in paying their bills and people who cannot pay their bills at all.

Smith issued 15 notices of tax taking last week because of non-payment of taxes. The largest payment involved Nicholas J.H. Wylie - the owner of the Bradley Street trailer park - who owes more than \$8,000 in back taxes. The most significant outstanding tax bill, however, belongs to Oak 'N Spruce Resort which has filed for bankruptcy and owes the town more than \$100,000.

"I don't know if it's the frequency, the increases in the bills or the economy, but we've never had the elderly pay as late as they did this time," Smith says. "We have a lot



Lee Tax Collector Janice G. Smith says taxpayers are overextended and financially strapped.

of people coming in saying they can't pay so we try to work with them."

People overextend themselves

In many cases, Smith says she believes people overextended themselves financially during the booming 1980s and now must struggle to keep up. "Banks used to be giving out loans that they had no business giving," says Smith, a Republican Party stalwart. "There are a lot of people who purchased property a few years ago for more than they should have. It's catching up to them now."

The other thing that is catching up to taxpayers is the voters willingness to spend money on major town projects. Two major capital projects were approved in 1989 and 1990 that the town is now starting to foot the bill for. One was the million-dollar restoration of Memorial Hall and the other was the expansion of the town landfill - another million-dollar expense whose full impact has yet to reach the taxpayers' pockets.

"I don't think people knew what the affect of those projects would be," she says. "Some painful decisions are going to have to be made. The unfortunate thing is the big money (in town government) is in the schools, the Department of Public Works and the police. It's going to mean some hard cuts. Maybe we can't be all things to all people anymore."

South Advocate town topics

Lee considers sign revisions

Faced with complaints about inconsistent conformity to the Lee's sign bylaws, the Planning Board has recommended the selectmen appoint a committee to revise the town's sign bylaws.

The selectmen say they will most likely follow the recommendation but decided to postpone taking action. The Planning Board has also recommended the selectmen cease giving waivers for signs.

Signs have become somewhat of a sorepoint at Town Hall as repeated complaints have been made about the town's enforcement of the bylaws against some businesses and not against others. Black Swan Inn has threatened to sue the town for its persistent attempts to fine the inn for an illegal sign.

The new committee would consist of a selectman, a member of the Planning Board, two businesspeople, a member of the Historical Commission and an unaffiliated member of the community at large, according to the Planning Board's recommendation. The committee would prepare a bylaw for review by the Planning Board which would then present it at a town meeting for approval.

A shady deal at Lee Memorial Hall

Times may be tough, but at least one Lee business is lending a helping hand in the town's financial plight. Country Curtains - one of the biggest employers in town - donated 47 pairs of curtains to the town for the refurbishment of Memorial Hall. Perhaps not by coincidence, Country Curtains President Robert Trask is the former chairman of the town Finance Committee and is intimate with the budgetary problems the town faces. Selectmen Chairman Diane Roosa praises the company's gesture, saying that it is a good deal for the town and not a shady one.

One Lee employee goes out, and one comes in, finally

After 12 years as secretary at the Lee Department of Public Works, Idamae Scaramuzzi is retiring effective Aug. 19. July 12 will be her last day. "That's a shame," said Selectman Martin Deely when he learned of the retirement. "She's been there a long time and has done a great job." The selectmen say they will ask DPW Superintendent to interview applicants for the job and recommend an appointment.

At another town office, the selectmen approved Town Clerk/Treasurer Patricia Carlino's appointment of Suzanne Scarpa as assistant town clerk. The selectmen had initially delayed making the appointment, saying they wanted to wait until interdepartmental secretary Patricia Walsh's job came to an end at the end of June.

South Advocate 6.5.91

Selectman charges Lee schools not assuming fair share of cuts

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa said yesterday she feels the school system is going to have to bear a greater share of the town's budget reduction than its representatives seemed prepared to bear on Monday night.

"I can't see putting so much of the burden on the little departments," she said in commenting on Monday night's budget-reducing exercise, where various department representatives offered cuts of varying magnitudes to wrestle the fiscal 1992 spending plan down to the Proposition 2½ tax cap.

In so doing, they appeared to have eliminated need for a new tax-limit override vote, and this prompted Roosa to wonder aloud why there had to be an override vote in the first place. The annual town meeting approved a \$255,000 override May 9, but voters turned it down May 13 in a referendum ballot.

Henry T. Zukowski, the school superintendent, said yesterday that without speaking directly to Roosa he could not respond to her comment, but did say he feels the school system has already taken its lumps and is ready to take another.

The last will be the absorption of whatever pay raises are negotiated by the School Committee and Lee Education Association for a new teacher contract to take effect Sept. 1.

The rule of thumb, said Zukowski, is that each 1 percent increase in the teacher pay scale calls for an expenditure of between \$24,000 and \$26,000 on an annual basis. Negotiations are still under way, he said.

He and School Committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey on Monday night said the School Department's \$4.3 million budget for the fiscal year starting July 1 already represents a reduction in service, if not in money.

One administrative position and possibly a teacher position will be eliminated, Zukowski said. Pay increases for non-teacher employees have been offset by reductions in other line items, he continued, and the \$136,178, or 3.2 percent, increase that the new budget represents

over the present one consists of state-mandated special-education costs (\$83,109) and all-but-automatic step and longevity increases in existing employee pay scales (\$53,069).

But Roosa and at least one other selectman, Martin H. Deely, said the school budget, being the largest departmental budget in town, should appear to shoulder a bigger share of the cost-cutting burden than it has done so far.

The school budget is slightly more than half the town budget of \$8.57 million.

Lahey on Monday night said about the only place where he felt the school system could take a cut is in its capital-outlay proposals. As a result, a \$15,000 appropriation to paint the foundation and exterior woodwork at Lee High School was deferred for at least a year.

A year ago, said Zukowski, the school system reduced its employee numbers by five. Next year, it will cut one administrative post and possibly a teacher position.

The rest of the burden will be shouldered, he said, when the teacher contract is settled. "I'm hoping we can absorb it without laying anyone off, but if we can't, we'll have to let staff go," he said.

Also on Monday night:

► The Selectmen finally approved a special permit for builder Thomas Garrity to erect a six-unit apartment block on land he owns off West Park Street. Garrity had sought the permit in April but had failed to submit adequate documentation and otherwise follow procedural steps outlined in the zoning bylaw.

The apartments will be adjacent to apartments Garrity already owns at the site. The only condition set by the Selectmen was that they be used only for residential purposes, thereby blocking possible commercial use on one portion of the property.

Although the project will be the first private one involving multiple units since the town imposed

a ban three years ago, it falls below the ban's guideline of 2,000 gallons a day or more of effluent into Lee's heavily burdened sewage-treatment system.

► The Selectmen asked Zukowski to contact the Cable Television Committee to explain his reasons for opposing turnover of \$5,000 to the recently organized Community Television of Southern Berkshire, a non-profit corporation set up to provide locally generated programs over the public-access cable TV channel in Lee, Lenox, Great Barrington and Stockbridge.

The money, said Zukowski, was meant for schools to use, not a sophisticated programming company that, whether non-profit or not, appears to be planning for fund-raising campaigns ahead.

Ecumenical service slated for graduates at Lee High

LEE — St. George's Episcopal Church will be the site tomorrow of a service of benediction for the Lee High School graduating class at 7:30 p.m. It is believed to be the first such service for a graduating class outside of the school.

Judith Olds, a member of St. George's and of the School Committee, said it will be ecumenical in that clergy from St. Mary's and First Congregational churches will participate and it will be open to all who wish to attend. She said the Rev. Denis B. Ford, rector, and parishioners of St. George's are organizing the service.

The service is being held because of the April ruling by the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upholding a lower court decision that prohibits prayers by clergy at public-school graduation exercises. The state Department of Education informed school districts of the ruling last month and told superintendents they should adhere to it.

Eagle 6.6.91

The Berkshire Eagle, Friday, June 7, 1991 — B5

Lee Housing Authority names Maroney director

LEE — The Lee Housing Authority has appointed William J. Maroney Jr. as executive director, effective immediately.

Francis D. Foley Jr., authority chairman, said that Maroney will succeed Sarah N. Portieri, who resigned for health reasons. He was chosen from a field of 26 candidates who applied for the position, Foley said.

As executive director, Maroney will have general supervision of the authority's business affairs and the properties for which the authority is responsible.

These are Brown Memorial Court, which is housing for the elderly, and Budd House, a group-living facility for the mentally handicapped. Both of these properties are on Marble Street.

Also approved for construction at an adjacent site on Marble Street are 16 units of family housing. Proposed at a site on Laurel Street is an educational facility for persons to be assigned by the Department of Mental Health.

A Springfield native, Maroney served in the Army during the Korean War and has been employed since 1955 by Western Mass. Electric Co. At the time of his recent retirement, he was district energy management services manager.

Maroney is a graduate of Springfield Technical High School and Western New England College, where he received a bachelor's degree in business administration.

He is a member of the Central Berkshire and Lee chambers of commerce, Lee Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus, St. Mary's Parish Council, Berkshire Center for Families and Children, and Post 893, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He has also served as manager of the Lee Little League and the Lee Babe Ruth League teams and as Lee High School hockey coach.

He and his wife, Norma Maroney, who is executive director of the Lee Council on Aging, live on Stockbridge Road.

Century Cable TV offers cheaper basic service to south county viewers

Responding to requests for a less-expensive basic service cable television package, Century Berkshire Cable Corp. has announced a new pricing package for its 7,400 south county customers. The change goes into effect July 1.

The new basic service offers 16 channels for \$16.95 a month with two tiers (gold and silver) that add 17 and then seven channels for an additional \$2 for each tier. The present rate for basic service is \$18.95 for an expanded basic service plus an optional \$2 cost for adding several more channels. Customers and town officials expressed outrage at the last increase — a 20-percent hike — earlier this year.

"For the overwhelming majority of our cus-

tomers, there will be no change in their monthly fees for basic service," says Philip Hopkins, general manager of Century Berkshire Cable. Basic service will contain all local broadcast signals, local access programs, two Boston signals, C-SPAN, M-SPAN and some shopping networks.

Anyone wishing to subscribe to the new basic service should contact the cable company based in Lee. The Century Cable serves Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and Great Barrington.

Lee Selectman Joseph DuPont was one of many people who requested the company offer a basic service. He says he is pleased with the new package, but adds that it could have been a better deal.

South Advocate

What Would Golden Hill Road Be Without Its Bridge?

LEE -- In recent decades, replacement of a vintage highway bridge barely elicited a raised eyebrow.

In the 1990s in Lee, the possibility that an 1885 "lenticular" metal truss bridge will be replaced by a steel and concrete structure has mobilized residents in its defense.

Ross B. Dindio, District 1 highway engineer, said Tuesday that his department had received a request from the town about five years ago that the span be replaced.

While the bridge has a low rating, and will not bear the weight of large trucks, it remains adequate for light car and truck traffic, he said. During high water, wood and debris in the river has struck and distorted some lower bridge members, and vehicles have once or twice struck the endposts. The bridge, by design, places all its load on those four endposts. (Residents of Glendale may recall a spectacular accident in 1974 when an auto struck the side of a similar through lenticular bridge over the Housatonic River, the entire span buckling and toppling into the water.)

In the years since the request was submitted, Mr. Dindio said, there has been both a change of opinion in the community and a change of philosophy in the commonwealth. The increasingly vocal neighborhood has decided it would prefer to keep the bridge -- which has a certain aesthetic appeal to many. And the state has decided that if something is going to be preserved, it should really be preserved. In other words, the state will no longer spend money to install a new roadbed and use the old bridge trusses as railings, as had been done years ago on Miller Avenue in Sheffield or Rowe Road in Egremont.

"I'm trying to bring out our philosophy," Mr. Dindio said, "that we're trying to help the community. I'm a public employee."

There was a meeting last week of Mr. Dindio, town officials and concerned residents. Mr. Dindio put it straight: If the town wants a new bridge, it can have one. The funds are there. If it wants to keep the bridge but build a new one, it gets stickier trying to re-site a new span. If the town wants the old bridge but in

a new location, it can have the funds that would otherwise be expended to raze it. And if it wants to keep the old bridge a few years more, it can.

The bridge is in a remote location, he said, and "has gone 60 or 70 years without deteriorating and probably with very little maintenance such as paintings." Three floods in the 1980s and two encounters with vehicles took a toll, however.

In a meeting last week, Lee Historical Commission Chairman Carol Marino said that one alternative is to relocate the bridge near Lee High School, where it could be used as a foot-bridge over Barnes Brook. Residents Hank Nadig and William J. Brighenti argued for keeping the span right where it is, saying that its value to local history is in keeping it right where it is.

"It won't go on for another 100 years," Mr. Nadig said, "with

Courier 6.6.91

Please turn to Page 16

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Bridge Continued from Page 1

the environmental pollution and so on. But it's possibly good for another 20."

Resident Tim Gray said efforts are underway to organize a neighborhood meeting. "I think probably there are people who would like a new bridge," he said, "but from talking with residents who live near the bridge, most of them just don't want a big new one."

The bridge was erected in 1885 by Berlin Iron Bridge of Berlin, Conn., successor to Corrugated Metal. The firm owned an 1878 patent by William O. Douglas for a style of bridge popularly called the "pumpkinseed," for its profile. The company built more bridges in Berkshire County than any other firm. Among the earliest were spans in Great Barrington. Only three Berlin bridges survive in Berkshire, an 1886 bridge on Pumpkin Hollow Road in Great Barrington, of a pony truss design similar to the one in Lee, and a through truss in the Blackinton section of North Adams, now closed to traffic.

The North Adams and Lee bridges were included in a major Massachusetts Historic Bridge Recording Project last year to provide a permanent record of the engineering history of bridges in the commonwealth. Also include in that survey from Berkshire were the Butler Bridge in Stockbridge, engineered by George S. Morison, and a Charles Ball-patent bridge over Phelps Brook in Windsor.

"The few survivors," in the opinion of Victor C. Darnell, of Kensington, Conn., retired engineer with the Berlin Construction and avid bridge historian, "are the visible record of the growth of this country's progress in manufacturing techniques and the growth of the iron industry. They also record the beginning and development of analytical design for the civil engineers. There are no early iron steam or sailing vessels left, iron in buildings was a later development... Only the bridges are a record of this dynamic phase of the American progress in industry...."

Beyond that, in the opinion of Mr. Nadig and others, there is a certain country charm to be found in the old structure.



Residents are mobilizing to preserve in place the pin-connected, Berlin iron truss bridge on Golden Hill Road in Lee.

Photo by Bernard Drew

Thursday, June 6, 1991 — C3

Lee wins golf title



Eagle 6.6.91

Bob McDonough / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee golfer Marcus Scarafoni gets the gallery's attention as he points with emphasis when his long par putt finds the hole during yesterday's Berkshire County golf championship match in Lee. Scarafoni shared medalist honors with 4-over-par 39 in 9½-8½ win over Pittsfield High.

Lee wins golf title over PHS

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Jake Naventi won his showdown with fellow state qualifier Brian Steele by one stroke, and No. 6 man Paul Consolati scored a decisive half-point as the Lee High golf team pulled out a 9½-8½ victory over Pittsfield High in yesterday's Berkshire County golf championship match at Greenock Country Club.

The victory gave the Southern Division champion Wildcats (16-1) their 11th straight match victory, their third Berkshire County title in seven years, and ended Pittsfield's two-year hold on the county title.

Naventi and teammates Ralph Olds and Marcus Scarafoni shared medalist honors with 4-over-par 39 in a match that was played in steady, chilling wind and occasionally heavy rain.

"Somebody came along and gave me a nice dry umbrella and a nice warm towel to dry off with, and that was a big help," said Naventi, who sank a 17-foot birdie putt on the fourth hole before the rains came.

In the same foursome, county scoring champion Olds sank a 15-footer for birdie on the fourth hole, then chipped in for birdie in front of a small gallery to win the par-3 seventh hole en route to his victory in the No. 2 spot.

Mike Consolati won his match by one stroke for a critical 2-1 win at No. 3, and after Scarafoni won 2½ points at No. 4, the Wildcats were on the verge of victory with

GOLF, continued on C3

■ GOLF, from C1

a 9-3 lead with two groups left on the course.

In the final foursome, however, Sean Anderson swept three points at No. 5 for the Generals to make it 9-6, but Paul Consolati tied the Generals' Pat Lange over the final four holes to split a point and give Lee its margin of victory.

Had the points been tied, Lee would have won the tiebreaker — the total of the four low medal scores — 160 to 163.

"We knew it was going to be close, but we thought we'd win," Olds said.

"I was worried when I saw the scores they posted against Wahconah yesterday," Lee coach Hank Zukowski said of the Generals' 13½-4½ win Tuesday — a round that featured a pair of 39s and a pair of 40s at the Country Club of Pittsfield. "Anybody who can shoot rounds like that at the Country Club can certainly play Greenock."

The teams had met once before this season, as PHS opened its season with a 15½-2½ loss at Greenock. Yesterday, four PHS golfers improved on their scores from that match, while all six Lee golfer scored higher yesterday.

As for the Generals, most coaches had expected them to finish no higher than third or fourth in the Northern Division this season after graduating five starters off last year's championship team.

"I'm really proud of the kids," PHS coach Brad Benson said. "They've done a lot more than anybody expected all season. Today, I just told them to have some fun and see what happens."

Only one of the 12 starters in yesterday's match was a senior. Lee's other county titles came in 1985 and 1987.

Western Mass. is today

Both teams will be back in action today, along with Berkshire County teams Hoosac Valley and St. Joseph's, as the Stockbridge Golf Club hosts the Western Massachusetts team championship beginning at 8:30.

There will be 15 teams in the field, including five Division 1 teams vying for two spots in the state Division 1 tournament June 12 at Easton Country Club and 10 Division 3 teams competing for three spots in the state Division 2 tournament June 10 at New Seabury Country Club in Mashpee on Cape Cod.

Longmeadow, which qualified three players for the state individual tournament, is the favorite in the Division 1 field, which also includes Pittsfield, Cathedral, Minnechaug and Westfield. Joining Lee, Hoosac and St. Joseph's in Division 2 are Easthampton, East Longmeadow, Gateway, Greenfield, Monson, Turners Falls and Ware.

Lee, which used the Stockbridge course for two of its home meets, is expected to be the top challenger in Division 2 after finishing third last year, but Zukowski was cautious when asked about his team's chances today.

"Let's just say I'm very happy with the team that I have," said the Lee coach, whose lineup features all juniors and sophomores.

Lee 9½			Pittsfield 8½		
Rd	Pts		Rd	Pts	
Naventi	39	2	Steele	40	1
Olds	39	2½	Kellar	41	½
M. Consolati	45	2	DelGallo	46	1
Scarafoni	39	2½	Curley	42	½
Biron	43	0	Andersen	40	3
P. Consolati	47	½	Lange	44	2½



Derek Gentile / Berkshire Eagle staff

Getting a big hug from teammate Dina Souza (No. 8) is Lee base runner Kristie Clark, who scored the winning run in the bottom of the eighth inning in Lee's 3-2 Western Mass. softball win over Hopkins Academy in Chicopee yesterday. At center, umpire Ed Ladley is declaring Clark safe. Wildcat teammates A.J. Skowron and Lee Brighenti are at right.

Eagle 6.6.91

Lee girls rally for 3-2 win

By Derek Gentile
Berkshire Eagle Staff

CHICOPEE — An unusual unearned run in the bottom of the eighth inning enabled the Lee High Wildcats to snap a 2-2 tie and defeat Hopkins Academy 3-2 at Szot Park yesterday and advance to the finals of Division 3 Western Mass. softball tournament.

The rest of last night's tripleheader was not such good news for Berkshire County teams. In a Division 2 semifinal, Wahconah was beaten 8-4 by Hampshire, while Drury lost to Amherst 3-1 in a Division 1 semifinal.

The finals in all three divisions, to be played at Szot Park, shape up like this: The Wildcats (21-2) will play top seed Munson (19-0) Friday afternoon at 4:30 for the Division 3 title. At 7 p.m., Pittsfield (18-5) will face Amherst (18-3) in

Western Mass. Softball

Division 1. And on Saturday at 1, Hampshire (16-5) will play South Hadley (19-5) in Division 2.

Lee 3, Hopkins 2

In softball, some games are pretty, some games are ugly and some games are just plain weird. Yesterday's Lee-Hopkins affair will be filed under the final category, particularly the bottom half of the eighth, in which the Golden Eagles (19-4) committed three errors to hand the Wildcats a run and the game.

The inning began innocently enough. Center-

SOFTBALL, continued on C3

■ SOFTBALL, from C1 *6.6.91*

fielder Kristie Clark singled cleanly to right and advanced to second on a throwing error. As Becky Rollins stepped to the plate, Hopkins pitcher Kris Ciaglo tried to pick Clark off second, which would have been a good idea had a Hopkins infielder been awaiting the throw. The ball sailed into short center field and Clark scampered to third. Hopkins catcher Becca Fil cut off the return throw and retreated to home plate to prevent Clark from advancing.

Satisfied that Clark would remain at third, Fil lobbed the ball out to the pitcher's mound. Unfortunately, Ciaglo had bent over to catch her breath and the ball sailed over her head onto the infield behind the mound. Clark, at least as surprised as the Hopkins players, sped home and into the waiting arms of her delighted teammates. Rollins never did get to swing.

"I saw the ball go over the pitcher's head and I just ran for home," said Clark later. "I didn't really see what happened, but I saw the ball just lying there, [in the infield] so I went."

"You have to send her," said Lee assistant coach Chris Coons, who was coaching third at the time. "No way anyone could get to the ball in time. Still, that doesn't mean I wasn't thinking to myself, 'Oh please, Kristie, get going. Don't get thrown out on this crazy play.'"

Before all this, Lee's chances had not looked good. Hopkins scored single runs in the sixth and seventh innings to take a 2-0 lead. Prior to the eighth, the Hopkins defense, particularly shortstop Kate Kelly, looked

ironclad, and the Wildcats were having trouble picking up Ciaglo's sidearm style, managing only three singles in the first six innings.

But in the bottom of the seventh, Michele Naventi worked out a walk and A.J. Skowron, who had swung awkwardly at Ciaglo's pitches in her first two at-bats, crushed a Ciaglo fastball into deep center field for a triple, scoring Naventi. Kelsey Scarpa's single scored Skowron a moment later.

"Well, we'll take it," said Lee coach Pete Warywoski. "We didn't hit the ball well until A.J. Skowron's triple. Things looked pretty bad there for awhile."

Naventi (15-1) pitched a solid game, allowing just eight hits, walking four and striking out five. Ciaglo was equally impressive, tossing a six-hitter, striking out six and walking just two.

Kate Kelly had a single and a double for Hopkins, while Dina Souza had two hits for Lee.

Meanwhile, the Red Raiders began pecking away at Bradford, scoring single runs in the third and fourth innings to tie the game and erupting for three runs in the fifth to take a 5-2 lead.

In that inning, singles by Heather Morin and Karen Henchey put runners at the corners. Jenna Bischoff's double, the only extra-base hit Bramer allowed all game, scored both runners and Haines drilled a single to score Bischoff one batter later. Hampshire added three more runs in the next inning on three consecutive RBI singles.

The Warriors rallied briefly, with a pair of runs in the bottom of the seventh, but could not make up the entire deficit.

Bramer (15-6) took the loss, allowing 10 hits, striking out six and walking three. She was also the Warriors' leading hitter, with three singles. Haines, who also allowed 10 hits, was the winning pitcher. She struck out one and walked six. Sara Skorupski had three hits for the winners.

Lee golfers win Division 2 title

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff

STOCKBRIDGE — Lee High golf coach Hank Zukowski stepped back, took a glance at his team's winning score in yesterday's Western Mass. Division 2 golf championship, drew a long breath and said, "It's a nice way to finish."

The sentence drew a shocked look from his players, who almost in chorus retorted, "Nice finish? We're not finished yet."

Wednesday, the Wildcats claimed their third Berkshire County championship, yesterday at the Stockbridge Golf Club they won their first Western Mass. title, and Monday, a determined bunch of Wildcats will take on the entire commonwealth when they compete in the state Division 3 team championship at the New Seabury Country Club in Mashpee on Cape Cod.



Photos by Bob McDonough / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Western Mass. champs for the first time in Division 2 golf are the Lee High Wildcats, who topped a 10-team field at Stockbridge Golf Club yesterday. From left are Coach Hank

Zukowski, Mike Consolati, Brad Biron, Ralph Olds, Jake Naventi, Marcus Scarafoni and Paul Consolati. The Berkshire County champs will seek a state title Monday.

Lee High graduates 78 at Tanglewood

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LENOX — Lee High School graduated 78 seniors yesterday in ceremonies within the spacious Shed at Tanglewood. About 900 family members, relatives and friends looked on.

Speakers drew the graduates' attention to the years ahead and urged upon them various courses of action, such as participation in the governance of the communities in which they eventually come to live. It is one of the responsibilities of adulthood, suggested the class adviser, John L. Reilley, and is also "the backbone of our democratic society."

For School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski, this year's class was the last with which he had a direct administrator-pupil relationship, he said. He was principal at the high school when the class members were freshmen.

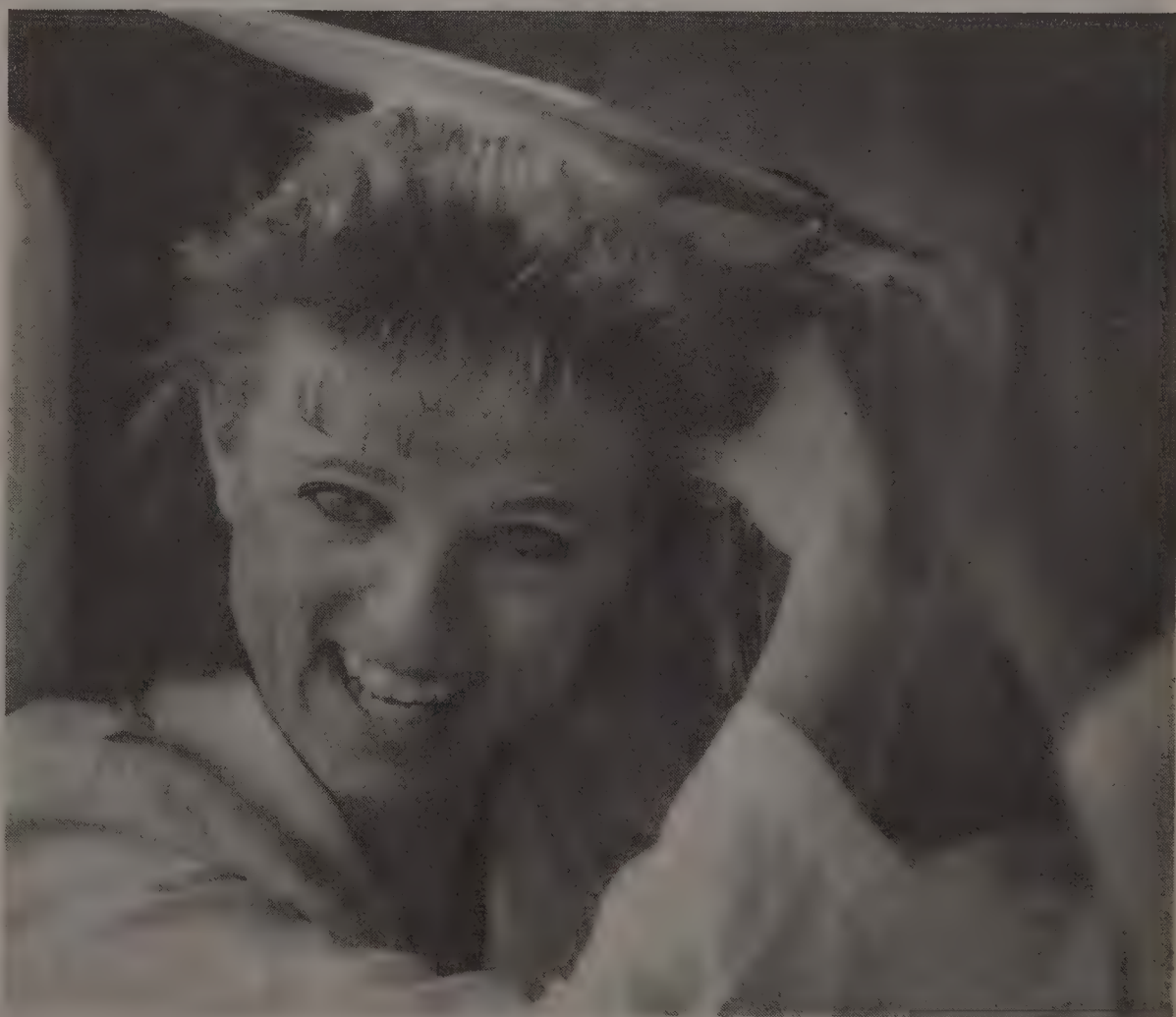
Set goals

He appealed to each of them to set goals for themselves, strive for them, "take pleasure in your accomplishments, learn through your shortcomings and constantly challenge yourself to improve."

"We have dreams," said Michele Naventi, salutatorian, one of two student speakers. "It is time," she said to her classmates, "to go into the world and make them come true."

The memories of the school years are special ones, said the valedictorian, Cynthia Cahalen, who described herself at the time as "an almost high school graduate." But while memories are comforting, "we need to live in the present," she said, and ended by urging her classmates to "seize the day."

Principal Richard T. Salinetti, in a welcoming statement, said he



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee High School graduate Amy D. Bonavitacola secures her mortarboard before commencement exercises at Tanglewood yesterday.

trusted that "all of you will strive to make this world better than it is."

Diplomas were presented by Zukowski, Salinetti and Reilley, who congratulated each recipient as he or she walked across the stage.

The high school band, directed by Charles DiNunzio, played the

old favorite, "Pomp and Circumstance," and afterward, the graduates, still in caps and gowns, formed a huge loop on the east lawn outside the Shed and welcomed their families and friends.

The previous day, a benedictory service was held for the seniors at St. George's Episcopal Church in Lee in light of the recent U.S.

Circuit Court of Appeals ruling forbidding prayers by clergymen at public school commencements.

Joining in the conduct of the service were the St. George's rector, the Rev. Denis Ford; the Rev. Robert Buckwalter, interim pastor at the First Congregational Church; and the Rev. Howard W. McCormick, pastor of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church.

Lee Releases \$5,000 For Community TV

Berk. Record 6.7.91

LEE—After a lengthy wait, and over the objections of school superintendent Henry T. Zukowski, Community Television of Southern Berkshire, Inc (CTSB) will be receiving \$5,000 from the Town of Lee.

The money, which is earmarked for the purchase of community programming equipment, was given to the town by Century Berkshire Cable Television Corp. as part of contract negotiations. When the arrangement was first made, there was no community television group in place to use the funds. But since that time CTSB began airing programs and became the designated group for Great Barrington, Lenox, Stockbridge and Lee, the towns served by Century Berkshire.

Each of the four towns was given \$5,000. All but Lee agreed to turn their money over to the

CTSB board, which comprises volunteers from the television, film and radio industry. Many CTSB board members also serve on the Four Town Cable Commission. The funds were to be used as start-up money and would be only a nominal portion of the cost of running the community station.

The hold-up in payment to CTSB from Lee stemmed from Zukowski's assertion that the money was intended for school programming and not for a sophisticated operation that would require fund-raising and high-tech equipment. The high school, Zukowski says, already has a television studio.

Though the selectmen agreed to turn the funds over to CTSB in spite of Zukowski's objections, they asked him to contact the town cable commission to explain his opposition.

& Town

The Berkshire Eagle, Sunday, June 9, 1991 — B5

Lee open meeting is urged

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — A former selectman believes it is time for Lee to return to an open town meeting, a form of democratic government that dates back to the colonial era.

Saying he is enlisting support from like-minded colleagues, William D. Bean said he wants to press for a referendum on the matter possibly next spring.

He has for some time that Lee's 21-year-old representative town meeting is becoming unrepresentative, said Bean, who stepped off the Board of Selectmen May 13 after six years in office.

He said he wants to circulate a petition after the town solves its current budget dilemma, probably in July, and push for inclusion of a referendum question on the annual election ballot next May.

Although town meeting approval

MEETING, continued on B5

Bean urges return to open meeting

■ MEETING, from B1

would be required to initiate a change in the meeting structure, he said majority support by voters would prompt town meeting representatives to back the move. Assuming such a majority vote were forthcoming, he would then push for inclusion of the change-over on a subsequent town meeting warrant.

Challenging the wisdom of the representative town meeting is not a new idea. However, Bean's stated objective of petitioning for a change appears to mark the first time in years that the idea has gained a champion who wants to take it to the voters.

"As budgets get higher, the average person wants more to say," he said, contending that wanting more to say goes hand in hand with wanting to vote. Town voters can speak on issues in representative town meetings, but only the elected representatives can vote, an occasional criticism of the representative form of government.

Override vote cited

The refusal of town voters on May 13 to approve a budget override that had been approved by the town meeting on May 9 is evidence supporting his argument, Bean said. The override was downed by a better than 3-to-1 margin in the May 13 election referendum.

The representative town meeting was adopted by the town in 1968 and was first employed in 1970. Three years later, a few disgruntled voters made the first attempt to return to the open meeting.

When the representative form was adopted in 1968, "people did not know what they were voting



William D. Bean

for," maintained Charlotte Pease Davis, an advocate of the open town meeting, even though she is one of Lee's present elected town meeting representatives. She explains that she is one who cherishes her right to vote and has been serving as a representative because that's the way she can exercise the right.

She said she is ready to help the initiative begun by Bean "in any way I can."

The sailing may not be smooth, however. Not everyone buys the idea that the old way is better.

"I for one feel it's working the way it should," said Edward M. Briggs, a town meeting representative who is also chairman of the Democratic Town Committee. Saying with a chuckle that he disagrees "with just about everything Bill Bean says anyway," Briggs said if residents feel their opinions are not being reflected in town meeting votes, they can contact one or more of their district representatives, all of whom are listed in each year's town report.

Packed meetings

To do away with the representative form of town meeting, he suggested, would be to return to a time when special-interest groups packed town meetings and voted to implement projects that town majorities might later find unpalatable.

Bean and Davis say they have

heard this argument before.

If an interest group packs a meeting, said Davis, "there is nothing to say that people on the other side can't pack their side, too." She said that was the essence of democracy.

In Bean's view, the representative town meeting has become apathetic. "You could see the problem at the 'baby town meeting' May 2," he said. "There were only about a dozen representatives there."

But Briggs argued that a lot of representatives feel that such small town meetings, in which no decisions can be made, are "a waste of time, especially when they're up on the issues already."

To Joseph M. Toole, who is town moderator, the representative meeting has proved its worth. He said representatives are generally well informed and bring a balance to debate that would be missing in the open meeting.

Furthermore, he and Briggs said, vacancies often crop up in the representative seats and persons who want to become voting members of the town meeting can apply to district chairmen or get on the annual election ballot with nominating papers. There are 54 elected representatives and seven others ex officio.

To Bean, however, it is time to test the issue because there are some voices in favor of the change. Besides Davis, he has found kindred spirits in another former selectman, Joseph J. Castronova, now chairman of the appointed Board of Public Works; and in Robert B. Trask, who just stepped off the Finance Committee, of which he had been chairman the past two years.

Trask said he would support a change, "but I don't know in what way at this point." Castronova, who has been at the center of controversy about as often as Bean in the past few years, said he thinks the open town meeting would generate "healthier discussion."

Looking back on his term as a selectman, Bean said he realizes that some people say he "stuck to his guns" while others said he was simply "bull-headed." But as with his belief in the need for the open town meeting, he maintains, his actions have always been motivated by what is best for the town.

Career jobs scarce for teen grads

By Holly A. Taylor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

At Lee High School, the job placement program usually swells each spring with opportunities for seniors leaping from high school into the work force, but that's not the case this year.

"Our placement program usually has 20 to 50 job openings, but this year we only had 10," said James D. Gralla, Lee's director of occupational education. "The employment situation in South Berkshire is very difficult."

The majority of high school graduates will go to college next fall, and a handful are entering the military. But guidance counselors in Berkshire County say the job market is a tough one and students with special skills are the ones who are landing jobs.

The handful of placements at Lee have included secretarial, retail and carpentry jobs, Gralla said. Of the 79 graduates,

51 students, or 65 percent, are continuing their education, three are entering the military and the rest, 25 students, or about 31 percent, are undecided or looking for permanent jobs, Gralla said.

No GE recruiting

Edward Plummer, director of guidance at Pittsfield High School, said, "The ones who are working are in specialized areas such as food service or cosmetology. I can remember 10 years ago when GE used to come over to recruit each spring and give aptitude tests to the students."

But GE, which has laid off thousands of workers in the past decade, is no longer mentioned by today's PHS seniors. Many are entering the service field as line chefs, hairdressers or store clerks. Of the 283 graduates, 214 are continuing their education, three are going into the military, 16 are unde-

cided, 11 are looking for jobs and 39 are working, although some may be upgrading part-time high school jobs to full time.

Pittsfield senior Todd Shoff is joining Berkshire Ambulance in September as a cabulance driver and hopes to become an emergency medical technician next year. His long-range goals include stepping up the career ladder to paramedic and then nurse.

"I didn't have enough money to go to college because I come from a single-parent family and the nursing programs are so hard to get into now," said Shoff. "I studied culinary arts and then switched to college prep once I knew I wanted to do something medical."

His starting pay in September will be \$5 an hour and would increase slightly as an EMT, but with paramedic credentials, Shoff said he thought he could

JOBS, continued on B4

■ JOBS, from B1

earn \$20 an hour in a place like Boston or Albany.

Brian Benlien, also of PHS, will work full time as a \$5.25-an-hour line cook at Papa Joe's restaurant in Pittsfield and will play in a band. A musician who plays piano and guitar and sings, Benlien hopes to save enough money to study at Pittsfield Community Music School.

"I want to write and sell music someday," said Benlien, over the blare of a rock 'n' roll band at the senior class picnic Wednesday.

Education continuing

McCann Vocational School in North Adams traditionally sent most of its graduates right to work, but, continuing a trend of recent years, half of the 76 graduates are continuing their education this year. Three are entering the military and 37 plan to work, said Cynthia Gross, a guidance counselor.

Some are still looking for jobs, but most of those planning to work "are well-situated," often in jobs that began under the school's cooperative work program. The difference now, Gross said, is that many students are joining small businesses instead of the large manufacturers, like Sprague Electric Co., which have cut back dramatically over the years.

The morning after graduation, Adam Ziarnik of Adams arrived at the Beaver Mill in North Adams to begin his full-time electronics job making cables and wire harnesses at Shine Wire, which has about five or six employees.

He will earn \$6 an hour and plans to continue with a second job on weekends in the kitchen of North Adams Regional Hospital. A native of the area, Ziarnik wants to stay here because of his family.

"I'm hoping to go to night school and move up to a higher paying job," said Ziarnik.

Apprentice electrician

McCann valedictorian David Moran of Adams will start work Monday as an apprentice electrician with McLain Electric in Clarksburg, a four-person business. His hourly wage is \$7, but Moran needs 8,000-on-the-job hours to become a licensed electrician, which pays \$20 to \$26 an hour.

"I started working for Mr.

McLain two years ago when the economy was still good. I like the work, especially with a larger house. I like to see all the different kinds of lighting," said Moran.

The son of a carpenter, Moran hopes to stay in the Berkshires and operate his own business someday, possibly a fire alarm or security installation business.

After his cooperative job at North Adams State College ends in August, McCann graduate Scott Critelli of North Adams hopes to find a permanent, full-time job.

"I'm not sure what I'm going to do," said Critelli. "But I want to stay here because my family's here. I hope I can get a job with a contractor as an apprentice electrician and then get into some business courses."

Lee Selectmen rescind Garrity special permit

The Lee Selectmen voted Monday to rescind a special permit granted two weeks ago to Thomas R. Garrity for six apartments on West Park Street. Town Counsel Jerome Scully notified the board that the selectmen did not have the authority to waive density requirements as well as short-circuit the application process.

The selectmen had previously voted unanimously in favor of the project although Selectman Joseph F. DuPont expressed reservations about doing so. The selectmen say they will reconsider the application. *Advocate 6.12.91*

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Mr. and Mrs. George Carpenter

Carpenters wed 50 years

LEE — Mr. and Mrs. George Carpenter of 7717 S.E. Continental Ave., Hobe Sound, Fla., former residents of Lenox, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a party May 18 at Greenock Country Club.

The party, which their family gave, was attended by 65. Their children are Neal, Gary and Dennis Carpenter of Lenox, and

Mrs. Sally Decker of Lee.

The couple were married May 25, 1941 at Holy Name of Mary Church in Valley Stream, N.Y.

Mrs. Carpenter, the former Margaret Levin of Hollis, N.Y., is retired from the Penny Saver.

Mr. Carpenter, a native of Maspeth, N.Y., is retired from Lenox Machine Co.

Colorful Lee landmark to be rebuilt after fire

By Gerald R. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 6.11.91

LEE — Robert and Rosemarie Dupont, whose colorful, seven-room frame house at 12 Robert St. was destroyed by fire in the early morning of May 4, will rebuild on the same site, "only this time bigger and better," Rosemarie Dupont said.

Dupont is a painting contractor who appears to like, ah, outstanding colors. His trucks, for example, are painted pumpkin orange and a kind of lavender purple. The house that burned was pumpkin and brown and had a green chimney. It was something of a Lee landmark.

They don't know yet exactly what the design of the new house will be, "but it will not be your average house," Rosemarie vowed. "We've got to carry on the tradition."

Pumpkin and purple

One decision she and her husband have made, though, is that the colors will be pumpkin and purple like the trucks. (A news story at the time of the fire said the old house was pumpkin and purple as well, but that was inaccurate, she said.)

After an investigation by a representative of the state fire marshal's office, the cause of the fire

was found to be a disruption, or short circuit, in electrical wiring in the rear wall of the house, according to Frederick A. Lantz of the district attorney's office. It was accidental, he said.

The remains of the house and a nearby garage that also burned have been torn down and removed and the Duponts say they are considering putting up a modular house in its place. But nothing is certain at the moment except the color scheme. "We're still trying to work things out with the insurance company," said Rosemarie Dupont.

She and her husband lived at the Robert Street address, a corner lot, for 20 years and raised their son there. They don't want to move. "It might sound dumb," she said, "but we sometimes get sandwiches and go over there and sit in the back yard and have dinner. It's the best location going."

She and her husband had to climb out of their bedroom window the night of the fire and walk across the front-porch roof and climb down a ladder that a local police officer put up for them.

They are living in a rental house they own in East Lee while waiting to rebuild. They expect to have a new house in place before winter.



French Peter the Rabbit comes to Lee

Joseph Toole has received a lot of attention for his novel idea of moving the former St. Mary's School and converting it into a luxury bed-and-breakfast on Main Street in Lee. But his latest idea, even he admits, is more peculiar.

Toole opened an art gallery this month and named it Pierre Lapin, which is French for Peter Rabbit. The gallery offers contemporary art and crafts "that you won't find anywhere in New England."

"I don't really know why I did it," Toole says, acknowledging that neighboring towns such as Lenox and Stockbridge provide much more likely locales for a contemporary arts gallery. "I wanted to do something totally different. I just wanted to do it. It's going to be very, very different."

Toole is also at a loss for explaining how he came about naming the gallery and coming up with a distinctive logo. The name was simply a name that Toole says he enjoys and the rabbit "just came into my mind. I told [Muriel] Johnny Chisholm what I was thinking about — a rabbit with a lot of personality, and she came up with the drawing. It was exactly what I was looking for."

"I have no idea how it will do. It just seemed like the kind of thing I wanted to do," says Toole, who plans to move to Florida part time later this year.

Lee board agrees to revamp sign rules

By Gerald R. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 6.12.91

LEE — Spurred by at least one man's contention that administration of Lee's sign regulations is "ridiculous," the Selectmen Monday night decided the regulations will be overhauled.

The overhaul will take six months at minimum, said Selectman Martin H. Deely, who pushed for the formation of an ad hoc committee to develop new regulations for inclusion in the town's 25-year-old zoning bylaw.

"Things have been building to a head for several months," said Planning Board Chairman Robert W. Birch. "It's ridiculous. Something's got to be done."

Birch and Deely were moved to comment during one of the longest Selectmen's meetings of the past year, lengthened in part by debate over three separate requests for sign installations that left no one pleased.

Heading the list was L. George Kish, co-owner of the Black Swan Inn, who has been trying to get permission to put up a 6-square-foot sign on the end of his inn for the past half-year, who was taken to court last January by Building Inspector Robert W. Lester for violating the sign regulations and who has been making the case that violations of the kind attributed to him are allowed elsewhere in the town with impunity.

"I've got to agree the laws are enforced selectively," Deely said to him.

Kish a week ago had reason to be optimistic that Deely, elected to the Board of Selectmen May 13, would prove to be a friend in court, but Deely said he could see no immediate solution.

Ironclad rules

He said he had since conferred with Town Counsel Jerome J. Scully and was persuaded that the existing regulations — if correctly applied — are ironclad: A

'I've got to agree the laws are enforced selectively,' said Selectman Martin H. Deely.

business can have one free-standing sign near the street and one on the building itself.

Kish in 1984 got permission from the town — he has a copy of the permit — to install individual letters on one end of the inn. This was in addition, he said, to a permit for a single sign on the front. Because it proved impractical to attach the wooden letters to the clapboards, he got permission from the then building inspector, Edward M. Briggs, to substitute a single sign for them.

About a year ago, the present building inspector, Lester, said Kish had to take one of the two building signs down because the Black Swan already had a free-standing sign near the road.

Kish, who has taken photographs of a number of businesses in town to show the proliferation of signs, said that this amounted to discrimination because his building had no more — fewer in some cases — than other businesses.

In fact, he maintained, the former Marble Hardware, which Lester and his wife, Charlotte, owned until they sold it in May 1990, had two separate building signs itself. It wasn't until shortly after the hardware store was sold, he said, that Lester clamped down on the Black Swan.

Now, he told the Selectmen, "I am a criminal. I have to face a

criminal charge. The removal of the sign will not lift it."

The charge he spoke of is actually two charges: putting up a sign without a permit and placing two signs where only one was allowed. They were continued last February until Aug. 26. Selectman Joseph F. Dupont said that as he understands it, the charges will then be dropped if the offending sign is down.

Kish removed it last winter. It stands in the corner of his office at the inn.

The inn is large — 286 feet long, Kish said — but without a sign on the end, potential customers can whiz by without knowing what it is. "I have to stand competition in this economy," he said. "I need that sign. I am losing money wholesale."

The need to be competitive was cited by the other two sign applicants, representatives of Sandri Oil Co. of Greenfield, which holds a Sunoco franchise at Lee Sunoco at 15 Park St., and Parker Fennelly and Ronald Fortune, who represented Lee Mobil Inc. at 170 Housatonic St.

Sandri's representatives, sales manager Laurence Jarvis and facilities engineer Heidi Bushway, said their company is installing a pump-island canopy and wants to put signs on it as most other service stations with canopies are allowed to do, both in Lee and in many other communities.

But a literal interpretation of the bylaw means they can only

put one sign on one end of the canopy, unless the canopy itself can qualify as a sign.

Deely said he thought that would be stretching a reading of the bylaw.

No decision

There was no decision on the Sandri request to put signs at the canopy's ends. Jarvis and Bushway said their company will build the canopy anyway — it is installing new tanks, pumping, vapor-prevention and fire-suppression equipment as part of a \$150,000 renovation project — and will either cover or leave open the places where signs would go.

Fennelly and Fortune were granted a 30-day temporary permit to erect a fuel-price sign over the pumps nearest the street. They will remove two similar signs that are on the service station building, they said.

All the service-station representatives argued that Lee's sign regulations are out of date — they do not recognize such things as filling-station canopies, for example — and that they penalize entrepreneurs trying to compete for customers.

In setting up the study committee, the Selectmen elected Dupont as their representative and will suggest that Jill Bickford Groff represent the Planning Board. They will advertise for at least three others, one from the Chamber of Commerce.

town topics

Lee sign rules cause problems, committee appointed for solution

Having faced three perplexing issues reflecting inconsistent enforcement of an allegedly inadequate bylaw, the Lee Selectmen Monday night decided to appoint a committee to revise the town's sign bylaw.

Selectmen and planning officials say the existing bylaw is woefully out of date and enforcement is at best inconsistent.

"We start out at a disadvantage [with sign applicants] because we know we have

signs that are illegal," Selectman Martin Deely says.

Confirming the consensus, three businesses either sought sign permits or complained about the town's enforcement of its bylaws Monday. Two gas stations -- Mobil and Lee Sunoco -- requested sign permits, and Black Swan Inn owner George Kish made his almost weekly request that the town drop its criminal case against him for an illegal sign and allow him to place a second sign on the building.

"I haven't been treated properly. I haven't been treated equally," Kish says. "My business is suffering because of it."

The two gasoline station representatives say their businesses will suffer because of the town's out-dated bylaw and add that several gas stations have existing

signs that would not comply with town standards. The selectmen agreed.

The board designated Joseph DuPont to be the board's representative on a five-person committee which will also include a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Planning Board and residents at large.

Lee gives cable TV money to CTSB

Ending a six-month debate, the Lee Selectmen voted to designate \$5,000 given to the town by Century Berkshire Cable TV to Community Television of Southern Berkshire Monday to develop public-access television on Channel 11. The vote came despite objections from School Superintendent Henry Zukowski who says

the money was intended for educational use, and the Lee schools are the best equipped and staffed to use the money effectively.

CTSB is a non-profit group that plans to do programming for the public-access station.

In other town business, Deidre Consolati, chairman of the Sandy Beach Committee, says weeds at Laurel Lake are growing out of control and pose a safety hazard. Consolati -- who is a columnist for THE SOUTH ADVOCATE -- says she does not have money in her budget to cut the underwater vegetation until July 1. Although nobody knows for certain, two drownings at the lake during the last two years may have been partially attributed to the weed growth which tends to make swimming difficult in parts of the lake.

The selectmen approved a plan calling for the relocation of almost all town boards and agencies into the recently renovated Memorial Hall. Lee Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo says the building can be occupied by mid-July. The only departments that will remain in the Airolldi Building will be the Tri-town Health Department, Senior Center and Lee Volunteer Ambulance Squad.

Town

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Most of Lee town departments returning to renovated Town Hall

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Most of the municipal departments that have been sequestered in the Airolldi Building since 1982 will be moving back to Memorial Town Hall next month.

The 117-year-old Town Hall has been renovated under a \$657,000 contract won by the Adams construction company of Souliere & Zepka Inc. The only refurbishing job remaining, said Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo, is the repainting of the former Lee District Court room on the first floor that now will serve as a general meeting room.

Scolforo said he will advertise the job for bids in the coming week.

Move on July 16

Scolforo, who will be in charge of the return of offices to the building, said yesterday his plan is to start the move July 16, a Tuesday.

"That way, everyone will have their meetings Monday and will have a whole week to settle in their new offices and get ready for meetings the following Monday," he said.

Nearly all boards, committees and commissions in Lee conduct their meetings on Monday nights.

The practice is one that has had decidedly mixed effects at the one-story Airolldi Building on Railroad Street, where offices are generally small and meeting rooms cramped. If, say, the Planning Board, the Selectmen and the Board of Public Works all have hearings or attract more than a handful of spectators at their respective meetings on the same night, the result can be something like the line of scrimmage during a goal-line stand.

On the other hand, there is ample parking outside, a point enunciated by Selectman Joseph F. Dupont on Monday night when the Selectmen voted to move their own office and files back to Town Hall.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P.

Roosa and Selectman Martin F. Deely said the space and convenience of Town Hall outweighed, in their views, the parking shortcomings.

From the signs, most other departments agree with them, for most want to make the move back across Main Street into the large brick hall with the mansard roof and marble foundation stones.

The Public Works Department, Planning Board, Board of Assessors, Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, tax collector and building inspector will make the move.

The Tri-Town Health Department and Senior Center will remain at the Airolldi Building. Some of the vacated space will probably be used to provide needed extra room for those two agencies, Scolforo said, but there could also be some rental obtained from new tenants.

State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, who lives and maintains an office in Lee, has ad-

vised town officials he would like to rent space in Town Hall, but there may be none left. On the other hand, there would be space in the Airolldi Building, Scolforo observed.

The town clerk's, treasurer's and auditor's offices have remained at Town Hall throughout the renovation.

The offices that moved to the Airolldi Building did so in 1982 when the second floor of Town Hall was declared unsafe and rooms there were vacated.

Under the renovation, not only has the second floor been restored and new offices constructed, but the basement, which formerly housed a cramped Police Department, has been renovated to embrace rooms and holding cells for an expanded Police Department and town switchboard.

The building has also been made accessible to the handicapped and has its first elevator.

Bean's Appointment To County Board Under Attack

By Gina Gold

LEE—County commissioner chairman Peter F. Menard, in a letter to the selectmen, took issue with the board's appointment of former selectman William D. Bean to the County Advisory Board and to the Advisory Committee on the Route 7 and 20 Corridor of Critical Concern.

Menard's letter included a copy of a statute that says only current or incumbent selectmen and city councilors can sit on county boards.

The selectmen, however, say Bean was appointed only as a representative and not as a voting member.

Bean asked to be assigned to the boards because of his prior active involvement, and because he knows more about the subject than any of the current selectmen.

Menard and Bean stand on opposite sides of the issue of whether to abolish county government.

Bean has opposed county government since he read a report by state Senator Arthur E. Chase that says county government has become obsolete and costly.

Lee High School Scholarships Presented

LEE -- The following scholarships were presented to graduating Lee High School seniors this year:

Lee Kiwanis Club Scholarship, Heather Browne, Ariel Collins and Michael DiMario; Mary Voght Memorial, Heather Browne, Cynthia Cahalen, Trina Cysz, Catherine Fennelly, Denis Ford, Michele Naventi, Rhonda Nixon, Rena Parker, Vanessa Piacentino and Alastair Taylor.

Melville Corp., Doreen Eckert; Lee Lime in memory of John M. Deely and Claude M. Haggarty, Cynthia Cahalen, Catherine Fennelly and Michele Naventi; Tri-Town Rotary in memory of Maurice Boulanger, Trina Cysz; Otis Kiwanis Club, Melissa LaGrant; Century Cable Cares, Vanessa Piacentino.

G. Marconi Lodge 1620 Order Sons of Italy, Timothy Boyne and Michele Naventi; Mead Paper, Denis Ford; Dorothy Trufant, Class of 1937, Doreen Eckert; Stedman-Myers Memorial Fund, Richard Heath, Thomas Mouglin, Vanessa Piacentino and Jennifer Simmons; Hop Brook Community Club of Tyringham, Richard Heath and Thomas Mouglin; Massachusetts Elks, Timothy Boyne, Vanessa Piacentino and Nicole Souza.

Scholarship in memory of David Bailey, Dawn Davis and Jeffrey Schilling; Bruce and John Stevenson Memorial, Richard Puleri; Martin Abderhalden Memorial, Rhonda Nixon.

Comalli Electric in memory of James Mouglin, Paul Mihlek; East Lee Civic Association in memory of Olive Cordonier and Edward Gage, Stacy Sagendorph; Jeff Cuene and Steve Weslowski Memorial, Brenda Dupras and Jessie McManmon; Father James M. Graham Scholarship for Humanitarian Concern, Stacey Soules; Berkshire County Female Athlete of the Year, Jessie McManmon; Radio Scholarship from First Agricultural Bank for WBEC's Scholastic Challenge, Brian Epps, Cynthia Cahalen and

Alastair Taylor; Lee Lions Club, Jennifer Simmons.

Gertrude T. Bailey Memorial, Nicole Souza; Otis Kiwanians, Catherine Fennelly; Retzel Memorial Athletic, Michele Naventi; Griffin Memorial Athletic, Timothy Boyne; Griffin/Retzel Citizenship, Melissa LaGrant; Michael Whalen Memorial, Timothy Boyne; Lee Education Association, Arthur Welcome Memorial, Michele Naventi, Brian Baker, Stacy Sagendorph and Nicole Souza.

Maurice Boulanger Scholarship, Steven Mack; Dr. John T. Cinella Memorial, Michele Naventi; Otis PTO, Catherine Fennelly, Krista Kokoszka, Nancy Nichols, Bethany Riiska and Jeffrey Schilling; Gridiron Club, Tim Boyne.

Scholarship in honor of Dr. Charles W. Stratton, Kathy Antoniazzi and Michele Bailly; South Lee Civic Association in memory of Joe Davis and Thomas Burt, Carole Ford and Steven Mack; First National Bank of the Berkshires, Doreen Eckert; Joseph T. Loring Jr. Memorial, Jon Dadak.

Abner Rice Scholarship, Timothy Boyne; North Adams State College Foundation, Richard Heath; Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 893, Brenda Dupras; Morning Star Chapter 217, Order of Eastern Star, Krista Kokoszka; E.C.H. Will/Clark Aiken Local 264, United Electrical workers Union, Brian Baker; Susan E. Nerrie Memorial, Stacy Sagendorph; Kelly Coty Memorial, Christina Bachelder; Lee Youth Association, Brian Baker.

Scholarship in memory of George W. and May J. Alter, given by their daughter Joicy Alter Heath, Denis Ford and Jessie McManmon; Michael R. Coty Memorial, Timothy Bianco; Williamson Family Scholarship in Memory of Jennifer, Shannon Driscoll.

Michael A. Curley memorial, Jeffrey Roosa; Lee Senior Citizens Club, Becky Rollins; Academic Competition Scholarship from Mr.

and Mrs. William Hall Sr., Brian Epps in memory of Marie Glomb.

Lee Band Parents, Timothy Bianco, Cynthia Cahalen, Marie DiNunzio, Denis Ford, Stacy Sagendorph and Alastair Taylor.

Quiz Team Scholarships given by Mr. and Mrs. William R. Hall Sr., Cindy Cahalen in memory of Shirley O'Brien, Brian Epps in memory of Robert Mack and Alastair Taylor in memory of George S. Johnston.

Harry Wheeler Memorial, Amy Bonavitacola and Timothy Bianco; Lee Pee Wee Football, Timothy Boyne; Student Council, Brian Baker, Cynthia Cahalen, Brenda Dupras, Denis Ford, Jessie McManmon, Michele Naventi, Vanessa Piacentino and Nicole Souza; Scholarship in memory of Albert Vinatier given by the Student Council, Steven Mack; Scholarship in memory of Gary Reichert given by the Student Council, Jeffrey Roosa.

Tyringham Fire Department, Catherine Fennelly and Richard Heath; Womens Auxiliary Post 893, VFW, Richard Heath; Eugenio Bonafin Award, Ariel Collins; Churchward Davis Scholarship, Jeffrey Quigley; Joseph Davis Memorial, Richard Puleri; Ardella Donnell Memorial, Class of 1933, Jessie McManmon; Industrial Technology Club, Paul Mihlek.

Marialana Impoco Memorial, Timothy Godwin; Decathlon Scholarship from Mr. and Mrs. William S. Hall Sr., Melissa LaGrant in memory of Joy Carty; Lee Chamber of Commerce, Vanessa Piacentino.

Trig-Star Scholarship, Jennifer Simmons; Scholarship in memory of Michael R. Coty by the Class of 1989, Keith O'Neil; Ladies Auxiliary of the Tyringham Fire Department, Richard Heath; Lee Town Players in memory of Cora Carrington, Brian Epps; Scholarship in memory of Patrick Edwin Fennelly, Catherine Cory and Jeffrey Quigley; Alan Wurtzback Award, Jeff Cook and Wendy Peiffer.

Community TV group finally gets Lee funds

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE -- The non-profit Community Television of Southern Berkshire Inc. will get the \$5,000 it sought from the town of Lee after all.

After six months of discussions, requests and proposals, the Selectmen have decided, at the urging of the town's Cable Television Committee, that \$5,000 received from Century Berkshire Cable Television Co. two years ago should be turned over to CTSB for equipment to assist in the filming and broadcasting of local programs over Century Berkshire's public-access channel.

Century Berkshire provides cable television service to four towns: Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and Great Barrington.

Bruce Kaiden, a member of Lee's Cable Television Committee and also a member of the CTSB board, said the other three towns have turned over, or will turn over, to CTSB the \$5,000 sums each of them received from Century Berkshire as well.

Protest from Zukowski

He said pooling the money -- \$20,000 in all -- will give it greater purchasing power.

The Selectmen three weeks ago said they were ready to do the same, but then School Superin-

tendent Henry T. Zukowski, learning of it, protested that the \$5,000 received by Lee was, in his opinion, meant for use by the school system.

Lee High School has television equipment and a program for students, he said, and is the appropriate organization to film local events -- town meetings, panel discussions, parades, sports events, concerts and the like -- for public-access telecasting.

CTSB has been organized to do the same thing, said Kaiden and other committee members, Stamas Vranas and Cathy Field. They observed that the Selectmen in February had designated CTSB as the organization to become a public-access programmer for the town.

After Zukowski's appeal for reconsideration, the Selectmen asked the committee to provide a final recommendation, which was forthcoming on Monday: Turn over the \$5,000 to CTSB.

Kaiden said CTSB has no intention of excluding student programming and in fact expects to emphasize education and school-system participation when it begins to film local events.

In other town business:

► Deidre Consolati, chairman of the Sandy Beach Committee, has informed the Selectmen there is only enough money left in this year's committee budget to clear weeds in Laurel Lake from the

public beach itself, not from deeper water or from the beach on the south side of the lake that the committee has cleared in the past.

When the new fiscal year begins July 1, she said, more weed clearing can be done, but the growth of weeds right now is rapid and has created "a very dangerous situation."

She asked that \$500 she had said two weeks ago could be removed from the fiscal 1992 budget be restored to provide additional weed-clearing money. "It's a matter of safety," she said.

► David Bruce, president of Lee Bank, has been nominated to chair the Community Development Corp., succeeding Richard E. Sitzer. Anthony Caropreso has been nominated as corporate secretary.

► The Selectmen will consider a suggestion from Selectman John

J. Pignatelli of Lenox that the two towns join to hire a single building inspector, or possibly join with Stockbridge for the same purpose.

Lenox Building Inspector John C. Stringer, who came under fire in that town last winter and spring in connection with failure to assess and collect water and sewer hookup fees, is resigning effective July 1.

All three towns have part-time inspectors but by sharing one full-time inspector they might be able to pay an adequate salary to such a person and at the same time improve service, Pignatelli suggested.

► The Selectmen are planning to interview applicants for a full-time Department of Public Works secretary to succeed Idamae Scaramuzzi, who will retire July 12. She has been the department secretary for 12 years.

On-off builder to seek ZBA vote *Eagle 6.16.91*

LEE — Builder Thomas R. Garrity, who received a special permit from the Selectmen last week only to have it rescinded this week, says he will go before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance to solve the problem.

Selectman Martin H. Deely, who said he felt he was partially responsible for the confusion, said he would speak on Garrity's behalf before the ZBA.

Garrity wants to build six apartment units off West Park Street next to a block of apartments he built there several years ago. Under the town's zoning bylaw, he needs the special permit.

Because his proposed apartments fell short of the minimum number of square feet — 5,000 — per dwelling unit, the Selectmen granted him a waiver on June 3. But Town Counsel Jerome J. Scully advised the board on Monday they could not waive the square-foot minimums and had to rescind the permit.

Ironically, Selectman Joseph F. DuPont, who had argued ahead of the June 3 vote that the square-foot minimums should be observed, finally cast his vote in favor of the waiver and the special permit that night. He said he would not hold up the project "if I'm the only one in town against it."

Golden Hill Bridge May Close to Cars *Record 6.14.91*

By Gina Gold

LEE—The historic Golden Hill Bridge, built in 1885, may soon be closed to all but pedestrian traffic. Or it may be moved to a new location altogether. This was the conclusion drawn at a recent hearing in which state and local officials worked to determine the fate of the span. Because of its narrow width and deteriorating condition, the bridge no longer serves the town's traffic needs.

The Golden Hill Bridge, which crosses the Housatonic River, is the oldest of its kind in Massachusetts and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. It is called a lenticular ponytruss bridge. There are four others in the Commonwealth.

In 1986 town superintendent J. Peter Scolforo asked the state to repair or replace the bridge. His request was placed 338th in line of priority.

However, with the recent decision by the Weld administration to step up repairs on the state's bridges, the Golden Hill project has found new and eager support from the state Department of Public Works.

Among the options suggested by residents and town officials were leaving the bridge in place for pedestrians and building a new one downstream. Lee Historical Commission chairman Carol Marino suggested that the bridge be moved to Lee High School property where it can be used to connect athletic fields.

Town residents told the selectmen that regardless of whether a new bridge is built, the old one should be saved. They said it was an integral part of the community both historically and visually. Marino said grant money might be obtained to partially fund restoration.

If there is a new bridge it will not be a replica of the old, but would approximate aesthetics that were used in the original construction. Dindio suggests that it will be two short spans rather than one long, because it is more cost effective. Town D.P.W. chairman Joseph Castronova said he favored one span because a pier to connect the spans might collect debris.

The town D.P.W. as well as the Planning Board, Fire Department and Conservation and Historical Commissions will submit recommendations to the selectmen before the fate of the bridge is made final.

D.R. Dawdy

Can do *Eagle 6.15.91*

LEE

It's a little after 9 a.m. on a recent Saturday at the eastbound service area of the concrete-and-asphalt river called the Mass Pike. Half-doing in my van in the employees' parking lot, I see in the rear-view mirror a sedan pull up and park. An elderly man gets out. In his hands are an extender-device, like the one used to get hard-to-reach objects down off shelves, a plastic bag and a long stick. He trots off briskly in the morning air past the gate and the semis.

The semis, some shut down, some idling, are parked in rows. Their drivers (paid \$15 to 20 per hour?), some sleeping still, some getting another quart of coffee at the Burger King, are poised for final runs into Hartford or Boston, or saving their eyes for the long haul into Maine and home.

A fancy motor home is parked — a huge diesel rig looking like a whole Greyhound motor coach converted for the pleasure of those who can retire in style (\$40,000.00 plus per year?). These nomads have a satellite dish pointed toward their daily fix of "Good Morning America," before resuming their retirement in the slow lane.

Our gray-haired elder stops at the first green receptacle. With keen eye and extender, he snaps up an aluminum can and deftly bags it, pokes around for more, then moves to the next and the next, then disappears around the building.

He returns to the back gate. His eyes meet mine. "I'm on Social Security." (About \$600 per month?) He pauses and shakes his head. "Ya gotta do somethin'."

At 12:45 p.m. I feel awake enough to drive off. As I'm about to, an old station wagon pulls up and out pop three people: a 10- or 11-year-old boy in T-shirt and jeans; mom, with slacks and shirt and the kind of rubber gloves you might use to wash the dishes; and pop (ex-gas station attendant, current income?), armed with just a plastic bag.

They say little and move quickly. The boy and mom go off in the same direction as the elder did in the morning, the father toward the dumpster behind the Mobil station.

Ah, I think, they'll not find much. In a few minutes, out from behind the semi-trailers comes reunited family — mother and son with a small bag, no more than four cans; father, who had vaulted into the dumpster, with full plastic bag containing, to my expert eye, about \$1.50 in redeemables.

The kid hits a rain puddle hard in his sneakers. The father threatens physical violence if he ever sees the kid do that again! The kid says he won't. They are off in the station wagon, the father's anger implicit in the acceleration.

Not much left for me, I figure, but you never know what's possible unless you try. I hit the cans at the gas pumps — it helps to be in uniform — and am not disappointed. Enough cans to translate into two gallons of gas.

The Lord is indeed merciful and the world bountiful. The stream of aluminum floats down river, barges of consumed soda pop and case after case of cans from the beer we deserve after a hard day looking for work — each thoughtless consumer purging automobile of gleaming trash one more of the president's thousand — nay, million — points of light.

Retiree, family of three, gas station attendant (\$5.50 per hour) looking for gas money, all find something in the never-ending stream of trash.

Is this the much-vaunted safety net of a Kinder, Gentler Administration banking on a consumer-driven revival to a sagging economy — the WPA of the '30s replaced by the more philosophical, vaguer KGA? It reminds me of scenes I saw in Delhi, India, in 1980, and 1982. They don't have a safety net, either. The untouchables garner a living from picking and sorting rags to be recycled. The employed grass cutters I saw in their colorful saris crouched on the vast lawn of the parliament building a good half mile away, each armed with a pair of scissors and trimming the lawn that day, and the day after and the day after, happy for their pay (about \$10 a month).

Don't get me wrong. I don't think any particular kind of work is de-meaning. But if it is a kindlier and gentler United States we want, we had better be doing it ourselves, not waiting for someone in Washington to hand us a leaf skimmer at one end of the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pond and point us toward the memorial to a man who dedicated his administration to economic freedom for all.

The right to abundance and economic freedom, as with all inheritances, however, must be conquered by each succeeding generation. It is we, not presidents and vice presidents, who must write the new social contract for a kinder, gentler America if that is what we want.

D.R. Dawdy, Pittsfield resident and free-lance writer, works the overnight shift at the Mobil station on the Massachusetts Turnpike in Lee.

All out to save Golden Hill

To the Editor of THE EAGLE:—

I read with great interest Hank Nadig's column in the June 1 Eagle regarding the replacement of the Golden Hill Road bridge in Lee. Hank asks if anyone questioned the people in the Golden Hill neighborhood whether they want to have large truck and bus traffic coming up that way. Unfortunately, nobody has asked us!

There are 28 houses on the hill. Golden Hill is one of the few remaining open spaces left in Lee. From our windows, not counting the many species of wildlife on the hill, we see joggers, walkers, bikers, kite- and plane-flyers, bird-watchers and parents who bring their kids up to see cows grazing in the fields. Yes, Golden Hill is a very special place!

The question that arises is, who wants the 1880s bridge replaced? Certainly not the people living on the hill. I have a gut feeling that the only one to benefit from a possible two-lane bridge, no doubt with a line down the middle for two-way traffic, would be the big landowner of the bulk of the acreage on the hill, namely,

the mill [Schweitzer Division of Kimberly-Clark]. It would no doubt enhance the value of its land for development if and when it finds a buyer. We on the hill live in fear of this happening as we understand the land is on the market and what would be more enticing to a developer than good access to the land? It is too bad they don't consider giving the land to the town of Lee as designated farmland. As I understand it, they could get a tax write-off based on the present value.

The bridge may have problems, but with no money in the till it would seem more sensible to pour new footings — if indeed the bridge is unsafe. There is no doubt in my mind that there is an underlying reason for this concerted effort to forge ahead with this project.

The citizens of Lee are not to be stepped on as we saw last year in our opposition to the co-generation issue. It is my hope at this time that once again we will unite in voicing our opposition to replacing the bridge.

HENRY B. HOLT

Golden Hill
Lee

6.16.91

Near a balanced budget, Lee needs no override

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 6.18.91

LEE — The Finance Committee is within about \$35,000 of eliminating the need for a tax-cap override to balance its fiscal 1992 budget.

Finance Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennes told the Selectmen last night that, short of any "big surprises" from commonwealth offices in Boston, the gap can probably be closed by using insurance reimbursements the town has received to cover salary paid to a former police officer who was injured while on duty in 1988.

"You're telling us we're not going to have to go back to the voters for another override?" asked Selectman Martin H. Deely.

"Right," said DeVarennes. "If we get in a jam, we could probably yank another \$30,000 to \$40,000 out of available funds."

When the Finance Committee began working on its present budget document, \$238,894 above the tax cap was needed to balance it.

Although he painted an optimistic picture, DeVarennes urged the Selectmen to wait until the town receives its cherry sheet before scheduling a special town meeting for passage of a new budget. Cherry sheets, named for their color, spell out for cities and towns the amount of local aid each will receive, their assessments for county government and related financial data.

The Selectmen agreed to wait.

Town officials say Lee's cherry sheet has been promised by the end of this month or early July.

The current round of budget deliberations has been necessitated by Lee voters' 3-to-1 defeat of a proposed \$255,000 override on May 13. Town meeting representatives had passed an \$8.57 million budget four nights earlier that included the \$255,000 override, but voters shot it down in no uncertain terms.

At a session in the town office building on Railroad Street June 4, department heads and elected officials volunteered cuts in their budgets to start the review process. At the time, Selectmen and others thought there might have to be furloughs, cutbacks in hours, or possibly even layoffs if the town were to avoid an override of the tax levy limit, which is \$4.86 million.

The rest is made up of local aid

from the state, local receipts from fees and the like, and available funds, or free cash. There is not much of the last. DeVarennes said free cash is down right now to about \$80,000. The state Bureau of Accounts, which certifies free cash in all cities and towns, is strict in the uses it will allow.

Neither the Selectmen nor the Finance Committee hazarded a guess last night as to the date when a special town meeting will be held, but they appear to be aiming for one in July.

Cuts that were suggested in the June 4 meeting have pretty much been written into the new budget, said DeVarennes, except that the Finance Committee "thinks the School Committee should kick in \$15,000 or so."

School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski and School Committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey on June 4 said the schools could do without some capital improvements, like painting the high school, but could not sacrifice any of its operating funds.

The operating budget, which is \$4.3 million, will have to include pay raises that are being negotiated for a new contract with the Lee Education Association, they said.

But the feeling of the Finance Committee, DeVarennes said last night, is that \$15,000 "should not tax them so much they'll go broke."

Marble Hardware sign issue clarified

LEE — Two Marble Hardware signs on what appeared to be a single building on Main Street were in fact signs for separate businesses at separate addresses, says Robert W. Lester.

He and his wife, Charlotte, were the last owners of Marble Hardware Inc., which they sold in May 1990. They bought it in 1971 and expanded it in 1984 by taking over a store next door as quarters for an art supply, housewares, wallpaper and gifts business. The paint and hardware business remained in the original quarters.

Lester, who is the town's building inspector, said that because he had two businesses at two addresses — 54 and 56 Main St. — he was permitted the two signs under the town's zoning ordinances.

He brought this up Monday in the wake of an Eagle article that attributed to innkeeper L. George Kish a complaint that Lester as building inspector had cracked down on Kish for having two signs on the Black Swan Inn, but only after Lester sold his own business. Kish removed one of the Black Swan signs because the ordinances permit only one sign on a building and one free-standing sign that advertise the same business.

Implicit in his complaint was a contention that Lester had not been even-handed in enforcement of the sign regulations. But Lester said this was not so and that Kish's complaint was based on flawed information.

The town's sign regulations and their enforcement over the years have become an issue in Lee in recent months. The Selectmen are forming an ad hoc committee to propose new regulations as a result.



Eagle Vanessa Piacentino 6.20.91

Courier 6.20.91

Piacentino Wins Tuition Award

LEE — Vanessa Piacentino of South Lee has won a \$1,000 college tuition scholarship from Century Berkshire Cable Corporation. The award was jointly announced Wednesday by Philip Hopkins, Century Cable TV manager, and Richard Salinetti, Lee High School principal.

Ms Piacentino, who will be attending Bryant College in Rhode Island this fall, was president of the National Honor Society this year at Lee High. She is one of 50 seniors awarded \$1,000 tuition grants by the company nationwide.

Mr. Hopkins said the scholarship program is part of the company's "Century Cares" community outreach program under which the company and its subscribers jointly raise funds for community projects and local charities. He noted that "Century Cares" also had donated more than \$2,000 to the Lee Youth Association this past April.

Piacentino wins \$1,000 award

LEE — Vanessa Piacentino, a 1991 graduate of Lee High School, has been awarded a \$1,000 tuition scholarship by Century Cable Television.

Each of Century Cable's scholarship winners was selected for outstanding academic performance and superior community service, the company said. Piacentino is one of 50 seniors nationwide awarded a \$1,000 tuition scholarship.

Piacentino was president of the National Honor Society, and a member of the Student Council, the Foreign Language Club, and the Prom Committee. She was a class officer both her junior and senior years.

She is the recipient of the National Science Merit award and was a member of the varsity soccer and softball teams.

She plans to attend Bryant College, where she will major in accounting.

Lee Central recognizes 8th grade achievement

LEE — Lee Central School Principal Stephen A. Cozzaglio presented academic achievement and other awards to the 8th grade graduating students at the Annual Recognition Night on June 17.

Those presented silver pins for excellence were: Sarah Walsh, reading; Erica Landry, penmanship; Mark Walker, spelling; Stephanie Wescott, English, science, and home economics; Stephen Guidice, math; Jonathan Cohen, instrumental music; Carrie Gangell, art; Mark Mitchell, academic achievement (most improvement over two years); Lori Curtin, Scott Thomas, and Mark Walker, sportsmanship; Maureen Kennedy and Benjamin Simmons, citizenship.

The Daughters of the American Revolution award for excellence in history was presented to Megan Bachteler, the industrial

arts Golden Hammer to Maureen Kennedy, and the home economics Silver Scissors to Carrie Gangell. Todd Tyer and Kristen Coty were presented trophies for outstanding achievement in physical education.

Certificates were presented to: Megan Bachteler in reading, English, math, and science; Stephanie Wescott, reading, penmanship, spelling, English, math, and National Geography Bee; Chris Tisdale, reading, spelling, math, and academic achievement; Megan Holian, penmanship; Christine Cinella, penmanship; Lori Curtin, academic achievement, penmanship and home economics; Chasity Johnston, penmanship; Sarah Walsh, spelling, English, math, home economics and science; Benjamin Simmons, math; Mark Walker, math; Jonathan Cohen,

math; Stephen Guidice, math; Richard Guidice, math; Benjamin Sanger, math; Sean Peetros, math; Mark Curtin, math; Christopher Brittain, science and industrial arts; Shaun Kennedy, art; Michael Doe, citizenship; Kristen Coty, home economics; and William Perfetto, industrial arts.

Also, certificates were awarded in music for participation in the Concert and Jazz Bands to: Christopher Brittain, Tricia Castronova, Carrie Gangell, Richard Guidice, Stephen Guidice, Maureen Kennedy, Shaun Kennedy, Erica Landry, Christopher Tisdale, and Stephanie Wescott; for selection to the Western District Band: Maureen Kennedy, Carrie Gangell, and Stephen Guidice; for Western District Orchestra: Jonathan Cohen, Richard Guidice; and for selection to the University of Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble: Jonathan Cohen. The Most Improved Musician Award was presented to Christopher Tisdale.

Those presented Presidential Academic Fitness Awards were Jonathan Cohen, Christopher Tisdale, Kristen Coty, Carrie Gangell, Stephanie Wescott, Megan Bachteler, Sarah Walsh, Richard Guidice, Stephen Guidice and James Bartini. Mark Walker was presented with the Extraordinary Effort Award.



Mr. and Mrs. Elmer V. Forrest

Thomas P. Mosca

Forrests married 50 years

LEE — Mr. and Mrs. Elmer V. Forrest of East Street celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 26 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall.

The party, attended by 130, was given by the couple's children and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. David Forrest and Leonard Forrest of Lee, and Mrs. Eileen Miller of Ontario, Canada. They also have three grandchildren.

The couple were married May 26, 1941 at St. George's Church.

Mrs. Forrest, the former Lillian Abderhalden of Lee, was employed at the former Lee News Room. Her husband, also a Lee native, retired from Kimberly Clark Co. as superintendent of utilities and from North Adams State College as chief engineer.

They are communicants of St. George's Church.

Lee Nips and Tucks To Balance Budget

By Emily DeVoti

LEE — The budget may be balanced, but will it be safe to cross the street?

The deletion of the crossing guard position was one of the new cuts proposed by the Finance Committee in its most recently updated budget presented to the Board of Selectmen Tuesday night.

A tuck here, a tuck there, and the Committee has come up with a plan which will pull it within budget limitations for the 1992 fiscal year, without a tax-cap override.

The tucks include a \$27,000 reduction of the Highway and Labor account, an alteration of the Water account, and cuts from the Police Department's budget, including the cross guards.

Another available source would come in borrowing \$69,000 from Road Improvements.

Apart from internal reallocations, a cushion supplement has been newly recognized in the form of a \$50,000 refund on an insurance plan.

The new budget cannot be finalized until the town obtains financial data, including the amount of local aid which Lee will receive, from the state. This fund, compiled with tax money and local fee receipts, encompasses the town budget.

The state information has been promised within the next few weeks, and the firming up of the current budget will ensue.

A special town meeting presenting the new budget is expected by the end of July.

DeVarres seems to believe that the recent cuts will not weigh too heavily upon the various departments. He said that over each of the last five years, the

"It's not certified money for this year, but if we get in a jamb, we can borrow about \$20-30,000 from it," said John E. DeVarennes, Finance Committee chairman.

In addition, DeVarennes believes that the School Committee should kick in about \$15,000 in addition to the \$42,000 that they have already offered from their \$4 million budget.

The sum of these recently suggested cuts could mark the end of an ongoing whittling down process initiated by Lee voters' May 13 defeat of a proposed \$255,000 override to the \$4.86 million tax levy limit. The initial budget balance was actually \$238,234 over.

A representative array of officials met June 4, at which time department heads volunteered specific cuts to their own areas' funds.

This week's adjustments were the Finance Committee's objective attempt to determine how much more the departments could feasibly spare.

The final proposition for the

Continued on A12

town has raised and appropriated an average of nearly \$150,000 over what has been spent, implying that the problem is less in the lack of funds and more in the area of accurate financial estimates.

He expressed the Finance Committee's intention to pay closer attention to the budget process in the future.

"Next year, we want to know exactly what was spent last year, and in what order," he said.

Meanwhile, the preliminary budget leaves a mere \$300 in the bank, which DeVarres said necessitates one unfortunate message to the town departments: "If you blow it, there ain't no money to cover."

share MVP honor



Bob McDonough / Berkshire Eagle Staff

All-Berkshire softball team for 1991 includes co-MVP Jennifer Moreau, front and center, from Drury. Seated are Mount Greylock's Jen Bump, left, and Pittsfield High's Nancy Ringer. Standing, from left, are Lee's Kelsey Scarpa and Michele Naventi, Wahconah's Carrie Bramer and Carolyn Beaulieu, Monument Mountain's Lisa Arienti and Veronica Regalbuti and McCann Tech's Angie Bushika. Co-MVP Debbie Munger of Pittsfield High was absent when the photo was taken.

Cellular-phone company submits new antenna proposal for Lee

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Berkshire Cellular Inc., the company whose plans to erect an antenna tower for cellular telephones in Lee ran into residents' opposition last winter, has found what appears to be a solution.

It is proposing to erect four slender antennas on top of a newly constructed town-owned water tank that stands on the hill above Fairview Street in the south part of town.

"I can't even see the water tank," said Selectman Joseph F. Dupont, who lives on Fairview.

It was not visible in photographs taken by the company from ground level at various points around the site.

Berkshire Cellular is proposing to pay rent under an agreement that would bring into the town's treasury \$240,000 over a period of 20 years. The first year's rent would be \$9,000.

"You might as well say it's free

money," said Kenneth LaBier, the town's Civil Defense director and chairman of the Ambulance Service Committee.

LaBier, who was present when the proposal was unfolded before the Selectmen last night, said he was interested in it because of the benefit to the ambulance service if cellular telephones could be operated in the Lee area.

The Selectmen, after hearing the plan spelled out by Sue Proulx, real estate manager for Berkshire Cellular, said they liked it but would confer with Town Counsel Jerome J. Scully before signing a contract or 20-year lease agreement.

Proulx and a technical expert for Berkshire Cellular, Craig Smith of Delmar, N.Y., said the antennas on the water tank would give the company coverage of an area from Lenox to Great Barrington through Lee and part of Stockbridge that at present is a blank spot in cellular-telephone

service.

It is a section traversed by the Berkshire section of the Massachusetts Turnpike, a thoroughfare where such service is considered important.

Currently, most of the central and northern sections of Berkshire County are covered by cellular-telephone service, said Smith. So are Great Barrington and a part of Stockbridge and West Stockbridge.

He said that if an agreement is struck with the town of Lee, it would take about two months to install the antennas and make them operational.

Berkshire Cellular, which is a company formed by Nynex Mobile Communications Inc. of Albany, N.Y., and the Richmond Telephone Co., had proposed last winter the construction of a separate antenna tower on privately owned land in Lee near the turnpike. But residents in that area, remembering with alarm the battle of a year and a half

earlier with a company named Metro Mobile Communications Inc., made it clear they didn't like the idea.

Subsequently, state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, who had led the public battle against Metro Mobile and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, won agreement from Nynex that it would reconsider its plan.

At the time, Michael Cotter, regional director for Nynex Mobile, said his company wanted to avoid the sort of conflict that erupted in 1989. He said pains were taken this time to apprise the Selectmen and Planning Board of the proposal and to conduct an informational meeting for residents, which was held at the Black Swan Inn.

Proulx and another Berkshire Cellular representative, Paul Reed, last night showed the Selectmen photographs of the water-tank site above Fairview Street to show them how unobtrusive the antennas would be.

Lee preservation a group effort

Downtown eyed for awards, still more to do

By Erik Bruun

When it comes to the Berkshires as a tourist destination, downtown Lee is usually considered to be the town people drive through to get somewhere else.

But the town is developing a reputation for its historic character as an increasing number of historic renovation projects are being undertaken.

Recently, the local historical commission was asked to nominate downtown Lee for two national awards to recognize the historic character of the New England mill town. "They consider us as an outstanding example of a town that has rallied to preserve itself," says the Rev. Walter Ryan, a member of the Lee Historical Commission and co-chairman of a committee to preserve the Lee Congregational Church. "It's a very unique town center. There's a focal center with the businesses, the banks and the church, which has the tallest wooden spire in the country. It's a very dominating feature."

While downtown Lee is not a picture-perfect replication of an historic downtown in the same vein as Deerfield or Williamsburg, there have been several major projects to preserve aspects of the town. The outcome has been a downtown marked by many well-preserved features that mixes with the active commercial life in the mill town.

Some of the major projects include the town's \$1 million restoration of Memorial Hall, the costly and still incomplete renovation of the Lee Congregational Church, Joseph Toole's restoration and conversion of St. Mary's School into a luxury bed-and-breakfast, as well as the



The Rev. Walter Ryan, a member of the Lee Historical Commission, is working on an application for two national awards for the preservation of Main Street in Lee. He cites involvement from businesspeople, the Congregational Church and the town.

restoration of several downtown buildings by local businesspeople.

A business effort

"We've been very fortunate that the downtown businesses have been willing to renovate their buildings in an historic manner," Ryan says.

He says Kelly Funeral Home, the First National Bank of the Berkshires, Morgan House and McLelland's Drug Store are good examples of businesses on the lower end of Main Street that have undertaken historic preservation projects enhancing downtown.

Ryan adds that the effort has been a community one. State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, was instrumental in securing state preservation grants for the church and has been very active in improving the appearance of Lee. The Lee Congregational Church's project has proven to be a major undertaking for the church. And voters were willing to tax themselves two years ago to pay for the costly Memorial Hall renovation.

When Michael McManmon converted the former Marble Hardware store into

Continued on page 9

the Cone Zone, he went out of his way to restore the historic facade of the building last year. Ryan says Frank Consolati's decision to repaint his large Main Street Building this spring was another improvement.

Historic preservation is not necessarily a luxury, Toole says. For Lee, historic preservation is a good economic development tool.

"It's good business," Toole says. "If we're going to be a member of the Berkshire business community, we have to showoff a little bit. There's no better way to do that than to showoff our buildings. The potential for much more is there. It makes us feel better about our community and it's good business for the town in the long term."

When William Orford renovated the Morgan House, a restaurant and inn on Main Street, he says he decided that the best way to maintain the exterior of the building was to enhance the historic character of the building. "There's really no great story," he says. "I wasn't thinking about historical preservation. I just wanted to make it look good."

One direct economic benefit that has come from the preservation of downtown was the filming of the movie *Lethal Innocence* this spring on Main Street. Producers decided to film much of the movie in Lee partially because of the downtown's good looks. Those involved in the filming say they were very pleased with the filming and more film crews may come to the area for future movies.

Still more to do

Despite the successes, however, Toole says the town still has a long way to go to preserve its character. For every success story, he says, there is an example of a wasted opportunity. Further, most of the historic preservation projects have relied on individuals such as himself, Orford or Francis Downing, owner of McClelland's.

Last summer, he notes, the historic Sons of Italy building was torn down to make way for a possible small shopping mall. He says it was the latest of many historic buildings that were torn down to make way for speculative new businesses.

"There are a lot of people who are delighted when they see preservation but they aren't willing to go out on a limb about it," Toole says. "What's unfortunate is that in the past 20 years we have lost a lot of irreplaceable buildings. I hope in the future there will be an increase in preservation. There isn't a building between the ramp at the Mass. Turnpike and Laurel Lake that couldn't become an asset."

While other towns such as Stockbridge, Lenox and Pittsfield have designated historic districts where the town has added jurisdiction over what can and cannot be done on the properties, Lee has none, Toole says. Also, Toole says an historic designation could save developers interested in preserving buildings money through tax credits.

Toole says he could have saved thousands of dollars when he moved and renovated St. Mary's School if the building had been properly designated as having historical value. "I hope the Lee Historical Commission will take a

more aggressive approach in preserving historical buildings and try to get an historic district established," he says.

Ryan says several buildings have been listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and that commission members have been concerned about the future of several buildings and have tried to work with the property owners.

At the Congregational Church, he says, work has been completed on the spire but more work needs to be done on the building. So far more than \$400,000 have been spent but another \$80,000 of work needs to be done including painting the exterior. Although the church is now in debt and the painting project has been delayed, Ryan says the church may receive a major financial gift in the near future. "Right now, it's questionable when we can begin work again," he says.

"The church with its steeple is so important," he says. "Lee is the town people pass through to get to the turnpike but not many people realize the history that is here."

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town topic

New Lee restaurant gets license

The selectmen unanimously granted a liquor license this week to Larsen Corp. for a new restaurant at the former restaurant called The Place at 51 Park St. The new restaurant will be called Summer Times.

Glen Larsen, a Tyringham resident, bought the building at a foreclosure auction and plans to reopen the business before July 4.

In other town business, Building Inspector Robert Lester has issued a cease and desist order to Decker's Auto Service for removing gravel. Lester says he warned the business a year ago to stop excavating gravel without a permit from the town but the company ignored his advice. Lester says he will issue a criminal complaint in District Court and possibly Superior Court.



All-Berkshire golf team for 1991 is led by league scoring champion Ralph Olds of Lee, holding the John Ferris Memorial Award. Others are, from left, Pittsfield's Brian Steele, Monument Mountain's Brian Cunningham, Lee's Jake Naventi and Mount Greylock's Matt Cartier. Drury's Jim Schouller was absent when the photo was taken.

Bob McDonough / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Olds leads All-Berkshire golf

Squad without senior representation for first time

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Ralph Olds, who edged out Brian Steele in their season-long battle for the league scoring title and helped lead Lee to Berkshire County and Western Mass. championships, heads a historic 1991 All-Berkshire golf team selected by the league's coaches.

The historic angle to this year's team? For the first time ever, there are no seniors.

Olds is joined on the team by his junior Lee classmate Jake Naventi, Drury junior Jim Schouller, Monument Mountain junior Brian Cunningham and a pair of sophomores, Pittsfield High's Steele and Mount Greylock's Matt Cartier.

Both Steele and Cunningham are repeaters from last year's All-Berkshire team.

Two Wildcat stars

Olds battled neck and neck with Steele throughout the season for the scoring title, but his 3.6 average earned him the crown and the ninth annual John Ferris Memorial Award. That trophy, presented by the Berkshire Eagle since 1983 to the league scoring champion, is named in memory of a St. Joseph's High All-Berkshire player who was killed when struck by a car in Boston in 1982. Olds was fifth in league scoring last year.

Olds led the league with 10 sub-40 rounds in the league's nine-hole format, tying the Berkshire County season low with a 1-under-par 34 in a win over Lenox. His 4-over-par 39 shared medalist honors in the county championship win over Pittsfield High, and his 18-hole, 9-over-par 80 at Stockbridge was instrumental in

leading the Wildcats to the first Western Mass. Division 2 championship in the school's history.

Naventi, rarely found without a tee behind his ear on the golf course, was No. 3 in the county scoring race (up one spot from 1990) and saved some of his best efforts for last. He tied the county low with a 1-under-par 33 in a win over Hoosac Valley and added an even-par 36 against Drury. He also shared medalist honors in the county championship with a 39, added an 81 in the Western Mass. team victory and qualified for the state individual tournament with a 4-over-par 76 at Greenfield. This week, he also qualified for the state Insurance Youth Golf Classic.

Two more juniors

Schouller, whose father, Jim, is a former Berkshire Hills Country Club pro and is now a pro in New York state, was the steadiest golfer for the Blue Devils this season. He improved nine places from 1990 to finish No. 4 on the county scoring list, including a pair of even-par rounds, and would have been higher if not for an early-season 50 at the Taconic Golf Club.

Cunningham, the league's No. 6 scorer (7th last year), was a silver lining to the Spartans' disappointing season. He had six sub-40 rounds including a 1-over-par 36, then qualified for the state individual tournament with a 76 in the Western Mass. individuals at Greenfield.

Sophomore class represented

Steele was the key ingredient to the Generals' Northern Division championship surge, as he was

the league's No. 2 scorer behind Olds. That was one better than his third-place finish last year. He had seven sub-40 rounds, including an even-par 35 against Lee, and only one round higher than 40. He led all Berkshire County golfers with an even-par 72 to finish third in the Western Mass. individual tournament, and this week qualified along with Naventi for the state Insurance Youth Classic.

Cartier was the leading player on a young Mount Greylock squad this season, placing 17th on the league scoring list with three sub-40 rounds. He added an 82 in the Western Mass. individuals. He showed considerable improvement from 1990, when he never broke 45 as a freshman and finished out of the top 20 in scoring.

SCORING LEADERS

	Rd	Avg	AOP
Ralph Olds, Lee	15	38.7	3.6
Brian Steele, PHS	12	39.0	3.8
Jake Naventi, Lee	15	38.9	3.9
Jim Schouller, Drury	12	40.2	4.5
Jeff McLaren, Hoosac	11	39.6	4.9
Brian Cunningham, Monument	13	40.4	5.2
Marcus Scarafoni, Lee	15	40.3	5.2
John Bourdon, Hoosac	11	40.0	5.4
Brad Biron, Lee	11	40.4	5.4
Brian Zuccalo, St. Joe	13	41.1	5.5
Chad Wotkowicz, Hoosac	13	40.2	5.6
Mike Consolati, Lee	15	40.7	5.6
Ian Roberts, St. Joe	14	41.1	5.6
Todd Maloney, Wahconah	13	40.9	5.8
Joe Reiner, Wahconah	12	41.1	6.0
Dave Kalisz, Hoosac	12	40.7	6.1
Matt Cartier, Greylock	12	41.3	6.3
Dan Kearns, St. Joe	13	41.7	6.3
Jeff Keilar, PHS	13	41.7	6.5
Mike DelGallo, PHS	13	41.8	6.6



Old tractor brings back good times

Joseph Valenti's tractor is so old it belongs in a junkyard, maybe a museum. But it is in neither. It is still among the land of the mechanically living in Valenti's barn on Fairview Street in Lee.

"I'll tell you, they don't build them like this anymore," says Valenti, in photo above.

He is right. The tractor has no tires, no starter and no battery. You have to start it by hand with a crank. What the tractor has is metal. Lots of it. Valenti and his neighbor Joseph P. Barenski say there is enough metal to build two or more modern tractors.

Valenti credits the massive metal fenders with saving his life in 1946. The tractor turned over when Valenti struck a corn planter.

"That fender saved me," he recalls. "The tractor turned right over and I tucked in between the fender. I was with Bill Lawson, he was my hired hand. He fainted dead cold when he saw it. But I was OK."

Valenti bought the tractor, a 1934 22-horsepower Fordson, in 1935 for \$853. It was one of two tractors in town. Valenti says he got a lot of extra work because of it, besides tending his own 125-acre dairy farm.

"Those days it was fun to have a tractor. I used to get a charge when people asked me to do their work. When you're young, you've got the spirit. Nothing could hold us down, now that I think of it," Valenti says.

Valenti says he put the tractor to good use until 1951 when he bought a new one. The tractor was left outside. His neighbor's son, Martin Barenski, however, decided three years ago to revive the ancient tractor.

"None of the parts moved and the engine was all seized up," Joseph Barenski says, "but we got it inside and he worked on it until he got it going again. Of course, we didn't think he could do it."

But he did. And Valenti has been using the tractor on occasion on his farm, which is now just used for haying.

"That fellow is a mechanic. I'll tell you," Valenti says. "I'm very happy with it. I owe it all to my neighbor. It's what you get when you have good neighbors."

Firefighting muster rekindles in Lee

After a 10-year hiatus, the old-fashioned fire muster has been rekindled in Lee. The Lee Fire Co. plans to hold a muster Sept. 1, complete with a motorcade, field events and an antique fire apparatus contest.

"Its time has come again," says Muster Committee Chairman Shawn Burns. "There hasn't been one since 1981. That's when they all petered out because of insurance costs."

Burns says that six fire companies have already agreed to take part in the all-day event and that they expect about a dozen companies in all. The muster, which involves exercises in various firefighting techniques and skills, may be the only one in Berkshire County this year, Burns says.

Lee school board agrees to make dean of students post permanent

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — A 3-year-old high-school administrative post that has been at the center of a conflict between Lee schoolteachers and the town's School Committee will become a permanent position, the committee agreed last night.

The position is dean of students. It was created on a pilot basis in 1988 as something of a compromise between demands for cost cutting on the one hand and for continuation of a disciplinarian's post on the other. The School Committee earlier had done away with the post of vice principal.

Filling the deanship for the coming year will be its present occupant, Kathleen Bort, some of whose legions of advocates pressed the committee for the second time in a month last night to appoint her permanently.

Several students were among those advocates, including one, David Murray, who said he had been suspended by Bort during the past school year but who contended she was someone "you could talk to."

While the teachers' union, Lee

Education Association, won part of the contest, it didn't win it all, with the result that appointments to the post will continue to be made annually and will be based on evaluations of performance.

This won't mean that Bort will necessarily have to step down at the end of the coming year, however. If her evaluations merit it, and she applies for reappointment each year, she might well remain the dean of students until she retires.

Neil Clarke, LEA president, said as much last night after the committee had ended a 45-minute executive session to iron out, with LEA representatives, the future of the position and also to address a formal grievance the LEA had submitted with regard to Bort herself.

People who spoke on Bort's behalf — none was opposed to her — said she has been a hard worker who has been both a good disciplinarian and a wise counselor who has gained exceptional rapport with students.

"You can talk to her," said Patrick Kelly, a student, who brought down the house when he explained his remark with the comment, "She's not like a

teacher."

"You just fixed your marks for next year," quipped Chairman Lahey.

Last night was the night for a regular School Committee meeting, and more than 40 teachers and parents gathered in the meeting room at the Central School when it started. Fifteen were left when the executive session ended and Chairman Edward M. Lahey spelled out the terms of the agreement.

The smiles and brief applause indicated that it met with majority approval. A number of teachers had feared the post was going to be eliminated altogether because of cost cutting, and Clarke, in an address to the committee, said the union was appealing to it to retain the position and, if that were done, to appoint Bort to it.

After the agreement was announced, Clarke said the union's grievance was being withdrawn.

He and Lahey said the basis for the grievance was confidential and would remain undisclosed because it was now academic anyway. Those familiar with the issue said it had to do with the insistence on annual appointments.

town topics

Lee committee to study Golden Hill bridge

Concerned about the impacts of closing, repairing or replacing the Golden Hill bridge in Lee, the Lee Selectmen at the request of neighboring residents postponed plans for the bridge this week.

An ad hoc committee was created to study the historic but deteriorating bridge.

"There are just so many things going on and so much to look at, I think this whole issue has to be looked at more carefully," resident Timothy Gray said during a public hearing on the bridge Monday.

Built in 1885, Lee Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo says the bridge is in poor shape and he had gone to state and federal seeking money and assistance to upgrade it. Because of the historic nature of the bridge, however, the options were limited to repairing it, closing it or replacing it with another bridge, but find a way to preserve the existing bridge.

Neighborhood residents, however, have many concerns over doing anything to the bridge other than leaving it the way it is -- which is also a long-term concern as the deterioration of the five-ton capacity bridge continues.

Closing the bridge would be inconvenient to motorists and could cause delays for small emergency vehicles (larger ones such as a firetruck cannot cross the bridge now).

Repairing or replacing the bridge would be costly. Just studying the bridge will cost \$10,000, Scolforo says. "Ballpark" estimates range from spending \$150,000 for repairing it to \$350,000 to replacing it.

Residents are also concerned that upgrading or replacing the bridge would open the way for more traffic on the little-used bridge. The Lee Traffic Commission estimates only 100 vehicles a day use the bridge. But residents say trucks sometimes use the span to cut over to Route 20.

Lee water tank becomes candidate for cellular telephone tower -- again; town stands to prosper

Having failed in at least three attempts to find a place to construct an antenna tower for cellular telephones, Berkshire Cellular Inc. is renewing its effort to place the tower on top of the new town water tank in South Lee.

The company had suggested the option last spring but it was rejected when former Selectman William D. Bean said the private facility would endanger the town's state grant to build the water tank.

Bean, however, is off the board now and the present board appears unanimous in their interest to pursue the issue.

Berkshire Cellular would lease the top

"If that is made into a two-lane bridge it would encourage trucks to use it much more often," says Carol Marino, chairman of the Lee Historical Commission.

Faced with the conflicting opinions and incomplete data, the Lee Selectmen decided to delegate the issue to a committee consisting of two residents at large and members of the historical commission, DPW, conservation commission, selectmen, planning board and public safety departments.

of the tank for 20 years during which time it would pay the town \$235,000 in rent. Berkshire Cellular officials say, and selectmen agree, that the telephone equipment would not cause an aesthetic problem, which has been the concern in other locations where a tower would have to be constructed.

Officials, however, are concerned that the radio equipment could damage the water tank and have asked the company to provide more information.

"We'd be wise to pursue this," says Selectman Martin Deely.

Golden Hill Bridge Links Lee Advocates In Opposition to Replacing Historic Span

By Emily DeVoti

LEE — The conservation of character and the conservation of funds faced off this week at a crossroad, or rather a bridge.

Safety, efficiency, and historical preservation in light of tight finances were three of the primary concerns expressed by residents at Monday night's public hearing to discuss the fate of the Golden Hill Bridge.

The options were clear: to rehabilitate the bridge in its current location or to replace the structure with a modern truss bridge with a capacity for two-way traffic and heavy vehicles. Much hazier was the line which determines the superiority of one of the polar approaches over the other.

Several written recommendations to the Board of Selectmen awaited the hearing. Three were from residents, all voicing opposition to the replacement of the bridge.

The Conservation Commission submitted their recommendation that the bridge be restored on site, if at all possible, even though it might eventually result in only a foot bridge. Their

concern was that the relocation of the bridge would have a negative impact on the wetlands.

Abutter Tim Gray later explained that in moving the Golden Hill Bridge there might be a problem with the disturbance of settled PCPs in the Housatonic River, which flows beneath the bridge.

The Traffic Commission also thought that the bridge should be kept in place and in service, but that the grade on the gravel be leveled up to the bridge to keep it safe.

Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, Diane P. Roosa, expressed her support of retiring the bridge to a footbridge, adding that the addition of a two-lane traffic bridge would not be beneficial.

Selectman Martin Deely said that he would like to look ahead with the bridge, "towards the planning and the town development points of view 25-30 years from now."

"I would have no problem closing the bridge for only pedestrian traffic, if there was no chance of putting residents at risk," said Selectman Joseph F. Dupont.

The one catch is that for the government to pay, the bridge must turn out with a minimum 20 ton capacity.

One potential risk has begun to pose a problem already.

Currently, the bridge can safely transport 5 tons. The ambulance, loaded with a patient, weighs in at 750-1000 lbs. over the limit. Therefore, it must avoid the bridge.

This alternate route is 0.7 miles longer than the direct route which includes the bridge.

According to the figures sent in by the ambulance squad, this could take approximately 1.0 minutes from the rescue efficiency.

"In a truly life-threatening situation, one or two minutes would make a difference," Dupont read.

The weight limit on the bridge also bars the fire truck and possibly even school buses.

Built in 1885, the historic

bridge has carried its share of the weight; but, will the present structure ever be able to support more than 8 tons, even in prime condition?

J. Peter Scolforo, superintendent of the Department of Public Works, doesn't think so. "If we get 8 tons, I think we're going to be lucky, 8 ton loading," he said.

If the bridge is replaced, it will not be rebuilt where it is, but rather at a site about 30ft uphill from the Golden Hill location where there is better grade, according to Scolforo. A new bridge would probably have a capacity of at least 20 tons.

However, at a time when Lee, among other towns across the nation, is having trouble budgeting themselves within their available funds, esthetics and historical preservation is not the only thing to consider; the bread and butter issue is a very valid one to include.

For the potential renovation, no outside sources have as yet been discovered. The Massachusetts Historical Commission was suggested, but a local representative volunteered that the Commission is also suffering cutbacks and has no available funds right now.

Scolforo said that about six years ago, upon noting that the abutments on the bridge were starting to fail, he made a request to the DPW and entered the bridge in a federal program to replace it.

This program is still an option. The outlined federal plan provides the funding to rehabilitate the bridge or replace it, leaving only the engineering and maintenance fees to the town. The one catch is that for the government to pay, the bridge must turn out with a minimum 20 ton capacity.

If the Golden Hill bridge can truly never be renovated to meet these requirements, then construction of a new bridge would be the only option to qualify for the federal program.

Scolforo recommended this option as a practical one. He reminded the residents that bridges are no small expense, and he quoted the price tag on the renovation of the Valley Hill bridge at \$125,000. He later referred to the Willow Street bridge, a two-lane bridge in South Lee constructed under the federal rehabilitation program, which cost \$98,000 just to paint, a number which elicited remarks of disgust and gasps of amazement from the assembled residents.

It also elicited something else. Tim Gray, as an abutter, would like to see the bridge restored; but, as a taxpayer, he is hesitant.

"It's still our tax dollars at stake here. I think it's important to look at all of the options first," he said.

Gray reflects the ambiguity of many residents.

Hank Nadig, of Washington Road, spoke not as an abutter but as a concerned resident. He seconded Gray's suggestion to conduct a study of all available options for the Golden Hill bridge, saying, "This isn't such a simple matter. The more you look at things like this, the more complicated they get."

This statement came from a well-prepared speaker. Nadig spent quite a bit of time researching the bridge and its historical state of repair. He went to the DPW and discovered that the bridge has been reported as being in need of renovation since 1982.

He contacted the engineer, of Berger Associates of Wellesly, who gave a rough ballpark figure of \$350,000 to replace the bridge and about \$135,000 to restore it, not including maintenance, which would be very high for this particular bridge.

He said that even restricting the bridge to pedestrians only would entail a renovation comparable to that of single-lane traffic.

Martin Barenski, of the Department of Public Works, suggested another 90 days to research the matter.

Selectman chairman Roosa agreed, and the Board moved that an ad hoc committee be formed consisting of a representative from each of the boards concerned, in addition to a selection of interested citizens.

Represented will be the Traffic Board, Historical Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, DPW, Ambulance Squad, and Fire Department. Martin Deely will represent the Board of Selectmen.

Meanwhile, passers-by beware of signs: "Single Lane Ahead: 5 tons only."

Lee Issues ^{Record} Liquor Permit To Summertime

LEE — A liquor permit was issued by the Board of Selectmen to Larson Corporations for their new establishment, Summertime, an inn, restaurant, and lounge to be located at 51 Park Street, between Elling Hardware and Cumberland Farms.

Glen Larson, who will be managing Summertime, could not be present at the hearing, as he was out of the country. He was represented by his mother, Judy Larson.

"Glen was an Eagle Scout and then he was in the Marines for a number of years. He has just finished, and this is what he has decided he would like to do with his life," she said.

The Selectmen issued the license, with a standard warning by Chairman Diane P. Roosa, "We want to stress the importance that Glen follows the guidelines and procedures we've set."

With two letters of complaint received by the Selectmen this week citing other establishments' alleged neglect of liquor license stipulations, the Selectmen's advice was well granted.

Historical Recognition of Lee Sought

By Emily DeVoti

LEE—"Lee is a place to be emphasized, not just Exit 2 on the Pike," said Reverend Walter Ryan regarding his recent efforts towards winning the town its due recognition as a historical site.

Ryan and his colleagues on the Lee Historical Commission are busily readying Lee's entry to the National Historical Preservation Commission's annual contest, recognizing those small towns having done a great deal to preserve and maintain their sense of cultural heritage.

The Committee annually presents a number of national awards. From this pool of honorees, one or two are presented with the President's Award, the highest honor.

Ryan has received recommendations for the town of Lee from both the Berkshire County Historical Commission and the Massachusetts Historical Commission in Boston.

"The more recommendations, the better," he said, encouraging incoming mail from any admirers of the town.

All these letters will be added to the application, for which the Lee Historical Commission must prepare a large notebook of slides, articles, and fill out a three page questionnaire.

Ryan and his colleagues have been working consistently, but they still feel the push for the July 13 deadline.

The application is undaunting, however, after many years of intensive restoration projects.

Ryan retired four years ago, after holding Lee's longest ministry of the century, fourteen years.

Since his involvement with the First Congregational Church, it has spent \$139,000 on renovating the interior alone and an additional \$80,000-\$90,000 on the exterior, which has been restored down to the spire on the first turret.

The steeple is next on the agenda. It suffers a two foot tilt, the result of support beams

knocked off level by two lightning bolt strikes. Ryan hopes it will be restored and painted by the fall.

Memorial Hall, whose restoration should be completed by the end of the month, is another on the list of regenerated public buildings.

The town set up its own private bond to refurbish the two-story French mansard-roofed town hall.

This bond, private contributions, and two state grants, have covered the cost of the architectural preservations.

In addition, several private owners have done their share to hold on to Lee's 19th century appeal. Ryan cites the privately owned 18th century parsonage of the First Congregational as a case in point. Kelly Funeral Home, a flamboyant Victorian mansion, is a remnant of the Smith Paper Co. wealth, symbolizing in its own way the start of Lee itself.

All of these buildings, in conjunction with their Main Street and the base layout of the town, express and preserve the late 19th century building boom from which Lee emerged.

It is these buildings and this history which Ryan and the Historical Commissions think are so valuable.

The ensuing competition is just one of the measures that Ryan feels is necessary for Lee to become known as a historic community on the level of, if not surpassing, her neighbors.

He said that every other town in the area seems to make the tour books and hold a reputation for its culture and buildings. Stockbridge has the Mission House and the Red Lion Inn. Lenox has Tanglewood and the Mount. Sheffield has the Colonel Ashley House. Great Barrington has Railroad Street and the Searles Castle. Lee was not even on the National Register. "You have to start somewhere, said Ryan."

He started with the Register and then contacted the "Berk-

shires Guide"; as a result, it has included Lee for the first time this year.

"I called and asked them why Lee was not represented in their magazine. They felt there wasn't much to report on Lee. Well, that certainly got me going," he said.

Siren Tests May Mean Some Howls Of Protest

LEE—"Better warn the dogs," said Chairman of the Selectmen Diane P. Roosa, when Ken Labier, Director of Civil Defense, announced to the Selectmen that sometime this week, either Friday or Saturday at noon, the town will be testing the flood control equipment.

The town will hear the flood sirens for the first time since they were initially installed as a protective device.

These sirens can be distinguished from the fire siren in that they rise up to a high pitched ring that lasts for three minutes and then dies back down again. For the test run, however, they will only last 30 seconds to a minute.

The sirens are in three locations. One is at the Woodland and Mount Washington Roads, one at the fire station, and another at the sewer plant.

The sirens were put in place so that if the conditions were to come about where the Fire Department had reason to anticipate the breach of the dam, they could notify the citizens of Lee at the moment of danger.

Lee Establishes Sign Committee To Air Disputes

LEE— A new committee is in town, the Sign Committee.

According to Board of Selectman Chairman Diane P. Roosa, the committee was formed to settle recent sign disputes which have sprouted up around town.

"Some people seem to be allowed to do whatever they want, while others are not. We want to fix the by-laws so that everyone is in accordance," she said.

Six residents were appointed to the committee last week. They are Joseph Dupont, Carol Marino, Bruce Kaiden, Marilyn Kelly, Henry Donoboe, and Gordon Bailey. 6-28-91

Hodgkins moving office in Lee 6-30-91

LEE— State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, will move his district office next month to the town-owned Airolidi Building, but will close his present office one week ahead of time in order to make the move.

His aide, Carol Marino, said the office will be closed July 8 through July 12.

Hodgkins' present office is at the Zabian's building at 17 Main St., one flight up. The new quarters will be on ground level—the Airolidi Building has no second floor—and will be accessible to people in wheelchairs.

Hodgkins has been a state legislator since 1982. His first district office was in the Airolidi Building in 1983. He then moved to Memorial Town Hall before transferring to his present location.

People who want to reach Hodgkins during the week of July 8-12 can telephone his Boston office at 617-722-2400, Marino said.

Bort to Be Dean of Students For 1990-91 School Year 6-28-91

LEE—"Is my head supposed to be between those hands?" asked School Board Chairman Edward M. Lahey, in response to Lee schoolteachers' victorious applause following the board's late-night decision to make the temporary position of dean of students a permanent one, with Kathleen Bort to fill it for the 1991-2 school year.

Appointments to the post will be made annually, based on evaluations of her performance. However, under these conditions, it is possible that she will never have to relinquish the position.

Lahey's comment is a good indication of the tense air which marked the public hearing and private consultations preceding the board's decision.

Bort, a tenured Biology teacher, was the first person to be appointed to the position, which was introduced as an experimental one to be rotated among the faculty every three years.

This year marked the end of her term, but when the school board expressed their intentions

to crank the wheel as originally programmed and replace Bort with another teacher, Lee faculty, students, their parents, and concerned citizens were outraged.

A large number of these individuals turned out to advocate Bort and the position of dean of students at the Lee School Committee meeting.

"You can talk to her as a person, not as an authoritative figure, like a teacher. She's strict, but she's fair," said student Patrick Kelly, who will be the president of the junior class next year.

Several other students attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of Bort. Kelly said that many more would have attended if the popular musician George Winston had not been performing at Tanglewood.

"Really, it's remarkable that any kids have shown up at all; I mean, it's summer vacation! They don't have to be anywhere near here," said Erin O'Brien, School Adjustment Counselor for Lee Central, Lee High, and Otis.

Kelly works directly with Bort on a regular basis.

"The woman must put in a hundred hours a week. She's made my job 100 per cent easier, and 100 per cent harder at the same time," she said.

"She's an exceptional individual who benefits our community greatly," said parent and state representative Chris Hodgkins.

"Students respect her, no one walks over her, she does exceptionally well. When you have such a bright spot in a community, you recognize it," he said.

As for the state, he feels Bort is money well spent.

"I have a saying. If it's not broken, don't fix it; and if it's working, stick with it," said Doug Trombly, a Lee businessman and concerned citizen, who spoke in Bort's favor, even though he has no children in the system.

After announcing their decision, Neal Clarke, president of the Lee Education Association (the teacher's union) said that a formal grievance which the union had formerly submitted was being withdrawn and that both the union and school board were satisfied with their agreement.

Town to Receive \$240,000

Berk. Record

6.28.91

Roadblock to Lee Cellular Antennas Cleared

LEE— Representatives of Berkshire Cellular, Inc. met with the Board of Selectmen Monday night to resubmit their proposal to install four 20ft-high antennas atop the new Lee Water Storage Tank, located on Fairview Street.

If approved, the antennas will provide cellular telephone service to the area.

Preparations to carry out the plan were cut short last April due to a dispute over the property's ownership.

Now, selectmen say, the ownership will be taken care of within the month; it is to be town land.

The company, which is a company formed by Nynex Mobil Communications of Albany, N.Y., and the Richmond Telephone Co., wants to rent the space for twenty years.

Over that time, they will pay the town a collective sum of \$240,000, to be made in yearly, progressively scaled installments.

For the first five years, the yearly rate would be \$9000, increasing to a yearly \$11000 over the second five year period, followed by rates of \$13000 and \$15000 yearly in respective five year bands following.

The selectmen said that they need assurance that the project will not have negative chemical or electromagnetic affects, but otherwise voiced their favor of the project.

"It's a wise thing to pursue; it would be foolish not to," said Selectman Martin Deely.

Representatives of the telephone company presented the

Board with a series of photographs taken of the water tank with an employer on top holding one of the antennas.

In the photographs and sketches of the subject, taken from the surrounding vistas and abutting back yards, the antenna was practically indiscernible.

"I spent several days trying to find the antenna," said Sue Proulx, Real Estate Management Representative for Berkshire Cellular, Inc.

"We're trying to be as unobtrusive as possible."

"As a matter of courtesy, the abutters to the property will be notified," said Deely, but he confirmed that this time last year the abutters had no objections to the project.

If successful, the proposal will provide cellular phone service to an area that currently constitutes a large gap in the service, said Berkshire Cellular, Inc. representative Craig Smith: Lenox to Great Barrington, through Stockbridge, and, of course, Lee.

Although most of Southern Berkshire County is not covered, Great Barrington is, as well as the majority of Northern Berkshire County, including Pittsfield, North Adams, Adams, Dalton, Lanesborough, and most of Williamstown.

Lemanski joins Lee Bank

Eagle
6.28.91

LEE — Wayne W. Lemanski has joined Lee Bank as a loan officer with responsibilities for the origination of mortgage, consumer and commercial loans.

He previously was associated with Lenox Savings Bank for 18 years.

The announcement of the change in position was made by David J. Bruce, Lee Bank president.

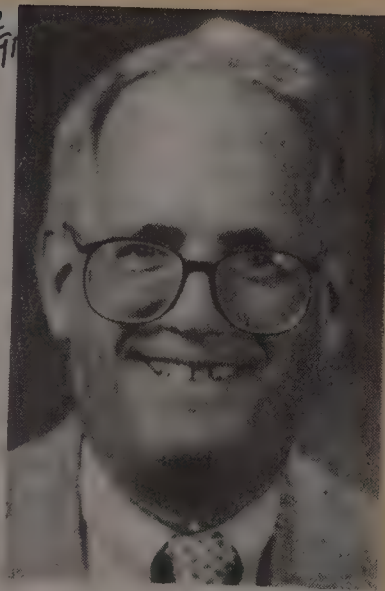
"Wayne Lemanski's broad lending experience, and knowledge of and involvement in the local community, will add to Lee Bank's ability to meet the needs of our customers," said Bruce.

Lemanski received an associate's degree from Berkshire Community College and his bachelor's degree from North

Adams State College. In addition, he attended the Graduate School of Savings Banking program at Brown University.

Lemanski is chairman of the Catholic Stewardship Drive at St. Ann's Church in Lenox, chairman of the Lenox School Building Needs Committee, a member of the Affordable Housing Partnership for the town of Lenox, and is on the finance committee of the Lenox Library. He formerly served as a director of the Berkshire Housing Redevelopment Corp. and as an instructor with the American Institute of Banking.

Lemanski lives on Plunkett Street in Lenox with his wife, Colette, and their two children.



Wayne W. Lemanski

Kripalu buys Foxhollow estate

By Lewis C. Cuyler
and Abby Pratt
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Kripalu Center of Stockbridge yesterday purchased the Center at Foxhollow from the Bank of New England for \$1.79 million.

The transaction ended a troubled chapter in the history of the property, one of Berkshire County's grand estates with a heritage dating from the Gilded Age of the late 19th century.

Kripalu, a non-profit holistic health spa, will use the 200-acre property and buildings, including 172 acres in Lenox, to house some of

its senior staff and visitors, said Sandra Healy, the center's chief executive.

Healy said the center will continue to occupy the building and grounds in Stockbridge, the former Shadowbrook estate overlooking Stockbridge Bowl.

Kripalu, headed by Yogi Amrit Desai, blends pragmatism and mysticism in a program that runs from aerobics and facials to yoga, chanting and meditation.

Aspirations of turning the Foxhollow estate into a wellness spa fell victim to the downturn in the economy in 1988 and 1989, precipitating a

series of events that led to the bank's foreclosure to recover approximately \$5.5 million on mortgages.

The bank bought the property for \$1.25 million last Nov. 7 at a foreclosure auction. At the time one of the bidders, who evaded identity, was believed to have represented Kripalu, but Kripalu never confirmed its interest, although such interest has been widely rumored.

The estate, overlooking Laurel Lake, was originally put together by inventor George Westinghouse in the late 1880s. The original mansion was torn down by Mrs. Albert

Gwynne Vanderbilt, a subsequent owner, who replaced it with a second mansion, also built in the grand scale, that later became the home of the Foxhollow School for girls.

Condominiums and spa

In 1977 the property was bought for \$650,000 by Donald I. Altshuler of Lenox and Dr. Stephan Rechtschaffen of Rhinebeck, N.Y., who began developing condominiums and a spa, a project that continued despite a fire in 1987 that severely damaged the mansion.

The spa part of the enterprise ran

FOXHOLLOW, continued on B5



After the original mansion was torn down by Mrs. Albert Gwynne Vanderbilt, it was replaced with a second one, also built in the grand scale.

Kripalu purchases Foxhollow estate

■ FOXHOLLOW, from A1

into financial problems following the fire and a New York City investor, Dale B. Krieger, attempted a rescue, opening a wellness spa in the spring of 1989. The spa closed the following September and the bank subsequently initiated foreclosure proceedings.

Those proceedings did not affect the bulk of the condominium part of the project, which remained under Altshuler's control.

Staff housing

Healy said yesterday that the purchase was prompted by the need for staff housing.

The rooms at Shadowbrook are small, she said, and "once you've been with the organization a long time, it's difficult to live like that."

Healy said Kripalu had looked into adding to the front of the Stockbridge building but found that would be very expensive. When the economy began to slump, she said, the center began looking at other properties.

"We decided to wait to see if anything that fit our pocketbook became available," she said.

Some 50 senior staff members will move to Foxhollow, while 150 staff and guests participating in a three-month program that sometimes leads to permanent residence will remain in Stockbridge.

"Nothing will change at

Shadowbrook," Healy said. "We will be able to upgrade the housing for some guests and residents and bring some more senior staff to Foxhollow."

Rumors of Kripalu's possible purchase have sparked anxiety among Lenox and Lee officials that the property would be taken off the tax rolls because of Kripalu's tax exempt status. Total assessment for the property is \$3.72 million with Lenox receiving \$26,486 a year in taxes and Lee, \$15,540.

The large mansion on the property is mostly in Lenox. The newer portion, built after the fire, is in Lee, along with numerous other buildings. Healy said the property needs a lot of work, including major roof repairs.

Lee Tax Collector Janice G. Smith said that on Thursday she received \$35,000 in overdue taxes, fees and interest owed the town. Lenox Collector Valerie Herrick said she took in \$15,316.

Prior to the purchase, Lenox Selectmen Chairman John J. Pignatelli and Assessors Chairman Edward G. Conklin said they were very concerned about losing the revenue from the property if a non-profit organization bought it. Conklin said he would fight any attempt by Kripalu for exemption from local real estate taxes.

Healy said last night she wasn't sure whether Kripalu would pay taxes on the Foxhollow property.

If it did not, she said, it would make a gift in lieu of taxes. "We will try to make the towns happy," Healy said.

Stockbridge Collector Leland W. Hovey said Kripalu donated \$16,000 in lieu of taxes to that town last year. The 127-acre property is assessed at \$8.7 million, and taxes on it would be \$70,464 if the organization were not exempt, according to Hovey.

Kripalu paid \$1.25 million in 1981 for the large brick structure it now occupies. The Society of Jesus had erected the seminary building in 1957 after a fire destroyed the former Andrew Carnegie mansion on a hillside overlooking Stockbridge Bowl.

The yoga center, founded by Desai in 1967, moved from Pennsylvania to the new location in 1983. Since then its guests and staff, although numerous, have kept a low profile except for their excursions onto nearby roads for exercise.

Last year, Kripalu bought a residence on Main Street in Lenox for overflow staff housing. Others affiliated with the organization have also purchased homes in the area.

The sale price recorded on the deed on file at the Central Berkshire Registry of Deeds was \$1,787,592. There were no mortgages recorded, indicating the property was bought entirely from Kripalu's resources.

C.D. Nelsen

Eagle Summer school isn't the answer

6-29-91

DALTON

It's that sunny time of year when people grit their teeth under fake smiles and ask, "What are you gonna do this summer?"

One perk of teaching in the public schools is a generous summer break. We do a 60-hour-a-week job most confess they wouldn't want. School vacations during the school year are spent grading, preparing and flat-out trying to recover from whatever bugs are going around that season so we won't miss school once it starts again. Summer is a chance to decompress — to come up for air slowly enough to really catch our breath.

I understand the voices asking for school all year round. It's been a century since most students were needed for chores on the family farm in the summer. This country has one of the shortest school years among industrial nations. Having students out of school in the summer creates a burden on families where all the adults work. Now that the summer job market has dried up, it's hard for older students to find employment, too. Why not put them back to work in school?

Before we keep our schools open all summer, we need to improve the quality of education during the current school year. More of the same is not necessarily better. Instead of teachers working even longer to entertain, discipline and inspire students despite our society's disdain for education, we all need to believe our educational system can and does work. Attitudes are the hardest thing to deal with in a classroom.

When the money dries up for art, computers, building repair, supplies and teachers even though it's there for bombers and bailing out the S&L's, the message is clear: What's going on isn't as important. Students and teachers sense it, and it affects both.

The bold gesture of extending the school year would send a message, but if this extension were as underfunded as current public education, it could backfire profoundly. Right now, funds for the basics are missing, and Gov. Weld's school-choice program passed by the Legislature will result in even less funding for poorer districts that must pay the tuition, and maybe the transportation costs, to send students to better districts, plus lose funding at the rate of the student's cost in the new school. Instead of playing musical chairs, why not improve all schools so no one would have to escape to another district?

Although I work in a relatively well-funded school, lack of funds meant the copying machine was off-limits and the machine made fuzzy copies at the end of this school year.

If our system of underfunded education were extended through the summer, it would be 90 degrees in my classroom with no fan. What student — what teacher, for that matter — won't be dreaming of a swimming hole or air conditioning?

Before opening up for the summer, let's formulate the new basics our students need to learn for a new century. Reading, writing and arithmetic are still cornerstones, but what too much education lacks is the creative and analytical thinking that makes these and other subjects meaningful.

Math teachers tell me that their students hate word problems; it's easier to figure out answers when you can just plug in the formula. But real life is full of word problems without given formulas. Other English teachers assure me that I'm not the only one to face antagonism when I ask students to come up with their own theories and reactions to literature rather than copy down mine. It's only much later while in a board meeting or during a life crisis that they'll realize the value of thinking for oneself.

Too many students value only good grades purchased with copying and memorization, not learning for its own sake. Too many parents want the grades, not thinking, whether the grades are backed by solid skills or not. Do we want a future with shallowly competitive achievers, unwilling to think independently or tackle the complex? Maybe that's what's wrong with our culture. We've lost the guts and gusto to do things the hard way, to invest in things that don't offer immediate return, to think for ourselves when making consumer, political and spiritual decisions.

It's the end of June, and I'm still obsessing about school when I should be walking my dog and writing a new book. The past eight months have been difficult labor, watching myself and other teachers struggle against the odds, worrying about our jobs and budgets, desperately contemplating strategies to motivate those who don't care in our classrooms, communities and political positions. It's the ninth month and this fragile baby called educational reform grows heavy, showing no signs it's ready for delivery.

C.D. Nelsen teaches English at Lee High School and lives in Dalton.

Lee inn readies for reopening

LEE — The closed inn at 51 Park St. that was purchased in May by Glenn W. Larson of Tyringham has been renamed Summertime and is being refurbished for reopening. Larson was out of town yesterday, but Jutta Larson, his mother, said renovations might be finished by the end of the week.

The Selectmen last week approved a liquor license for the inn in the name of the Larson Corp.

Most recently called The Place, the inn was bought by Larson at a foreclosure sale May 10 for \$183,000. The sale was initiated by the First National Bank of the Berkshires, which had been the mortgagee.

The inn is housed in a two-story

wood frame building with a wide L-shaped veranda across the front and part way down one side. According to various accounts, it was built in 1823 as an inn and has been used for that purpose off and on since then. In recent years, it has changed hands frequently. Jutta Larson said there was one 12-year period when it had a succession of five owners.

The property covers 1.9 acres and includes a six-room, two story house at the rear that contains a three-room apartment and three separate bedrooms. The main building that houses dining rooms, kitchen and bar, also has two apartments upstairs.

The previous owners paid \$325,000 for the property in 1989.

Eagle 7-1-91 Century Cable raises \$2,351 for LYA

LEE — Dave Canterbury, director of Lee Youth Association, and Philip Hopkins, manager of Century Berkshire Cable, have announced that the April fund-raising campaign sponsored by Century Cable to benefit the LYA raised \$2,351.

The funds were raised through a special offer on basic cable installation to new subscribers and upgrades to premium services for subscribers who contributed \$10 or more to the LYA.

The association provides many services to children and adults in Lee and neighboring communities, including day-care services, kindergarten, after-school programs, gymnastics, community basketball and a summer fun club.

76 Lee High students named to honor roll

Eagle 7-1-91
Honors

LEE — Lee High School has announced its honor roll for the final quarter of the 1990-1991 school year. Of 328 students, 76 achieved honors, about 22 percent.

To achieve high honors a student must have a grade average of 90 and above with no grade under 80, and to make the honors list a student must have a grade average of 85-90 with no grade under 75.

High Honors

Seniors: Cynthia Cahalen, Ariel Collins, Trina Cysz, Dawn Davis, Denis Ford, Sara Keiderling, Melissa LaGrant, Rodney Loring, Steven Mack, Michele Naventi, Rhonda Nixon, Vanessa Piacentino, Nicole Souza and Alastair Taylor.

Juniors: Rebecca Allen, Cathleen Cinella, Sheila Collins, Renee Cory, Amanda Lahey, Ralph Olds, Travis Roberts, April Slater and Heather Wells.

Sophomores: Samuel Fix, Mark Grady, Elena LaGrant, Timothy Logsdon, Felicia Piacentino, Matthew Puntin, Michael Puntin, William Roche, Kelsey Scarpa and Karen Scheurer.

Freshmen: Lee Brighenti, Sara Burt, Heidi Clauss, Jenny Cory, Chris Eccher, Joshua Shaw, Allison Skowron and Elisheva Verdi.

Seniors: Kathy Antoniazzi, Christine Bachelder, Timothy Bianco, Catherine Cory, Doreen Eckert, Warren Hunter, Jessie McManmon, Michele Pipa, Richard Puleri, Jeffrey Quigley, Jennifer Simmons and Anthony Viola.

Juniors: Nancy Ciramella, Paul Consolati, Mike Curtin, Michelle Kennedy, Betsy Loring, Heather Stanard, Jason Wampler and Richard Wescott.

Sophomores: Gwendolyn Goehring, William Martin, Patrick Stearns and Rebecca Sutton.

Freshmen: Rodney Bragdon, James Braim, David Cornellier, John Cysz, Amy DiMario, Nathan Jones, Andrea Koenig, Erin LaCompte, Melanie North, Kelly Palmer and Jeffrey Puleri.

Lee residents call for new study of condition of historic bridge

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Residents here who want to save the historic bridge across the Housatonic River on Golden Hill Road believe a study is needed because information about the bridge is sadly lacking.

Some believe the bridge is not yet the basket case that has been portrayed. Others say, OK, maybe it is old, but that does not mean it needs to be replaced — it could become a foot bridge.

Others fear that if the state builds a shiny new bridge, either in place of the old one or placed nearby, traffic will increase dramatically along the road, development will boom and the quiet, scenic surroundings everyone likes will be ruined.

These are among the reasons for the study to which the Selectmen have agreed and for which they are naming an ad hoc committee.

Some of the information lacking, says Timothy Gray of Bradley Street, who will be a member of the committee, has to do with cost. "I don't think anyone knows the cost of a new bridge or rehabilitating the old one," he said at a hearing June 24 at the town's Senior Center.

"Why not leave it where it is and make it a walkway?" asked William J. Brighenti, who lives on Golden Hill Road and spoke at the same hearing. "When funds are available, maybe we could rehab it."

There are some rough cost estimates from a Wellesley engineering firm, Louis Berger Associates, which conducted a study of the bridge in 1982, and from the state Department of Public Works. Together, they indicate that a new bridge just downstream from the present one would cost between \$350,000 and \$400,000.

The reason estimates are no more precise than this, said the DPW's Division 1 projects engineer, Edwin S. Taginski, is that precise estimates are impossible before designers know what is going to be built and where,

whether there will be two spans or one, whether land-takings will be necessary and so on.

All the interest in preserving the bridge, built in 1885, has arisen since last winter when state public works officials began talking with their town counterparts about replacing it. The state DPW put the bridge on a five-year timetable in 1986 after Lee's public works superintendent, J.

Peter Scolforo, asked for a new bridge.

The present one has been damaged in floods and its underpinnings knocked awry. The condition of the abutments and approaches is poor.

Yet various people at the hearing said vehicles heavier than the 5-ton limit posted at the bridge have crossed it.

"I've seen trailer trucks go over it," said Brighenti.

"Town trucks drove over it twice last week," said Joanne Nunes, who lives on Golden Hill Road as well. "Big trucks."

Scolforo said that in winter, snow plows, which can weigh from 10 to 15 tons apiece, depending on how much sand they carry, drive over it.

School buses are not allowed to cross it, according to a spokesman for the Dufour company, which provides bus transportation for several area school systems.

"It's held up since '82," said Henry Nadig of nearby Washington Mountain Road, speaking of

the year when Berger Associates prepared its report. He said a Berger engineer told him, however, that the bridge is "maintenance prone" and that even if it is limited to foot traffic, weight would remain a concern.

The Lee Historical Commission, according to its chairman, Carol Marino, would like the bridge preserved as a foot bridge. At the May 28 meeting, she said the commission favored moving it to the Lee High School grounds as a bridge across a brook there. But this was because the commission at the time thought it was going to be demolished and a new bridge put in its place, she said.

Meanwhile, the state DPW is waiting to hear what Lee wants to do. Under the present commissioner of public works, James J. Kerasiotes, the state "only wants to work on projects that are doable," said Ross B. Dindio, the District 1 highway engineer. If Lee wants to build a new bridge while preserving the old one, fine. If not, that's fine too, he said.

Bridge committee formed

LEE — At the urging of residents who live near the historic Golden Hill Road bridge, the Selectmen are forming an ad hoc committee to decide the bridge's future.

It may not be as easy as it sounds. There are enough opinions on the issue to occupy a committee for a long time. But Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa says the committee's report and recommendation should be forthcoming in perhaps three months.

Committee members will meet July 8 to organize and to choose a chairman, said Pauline Pollard, secretary to the Selectmen.

The panel will have at least 10 members, eight from as many town departments and commissions, and two from among the residents who live near the bridge.

The last will be Joanne Nunes, who lives on Golden Hill Road itself, and Timothy Gray, who lives on nearby Bradley Street and is proprietor of the Golden Hill Nursery.

Roosa named Selectman Martin H. Deely as the Selectmen's representative. Martin Barenski, who lives on Golden Hill Road, will represent the Board of Public Works, of which he is a member.

Others will represent the Traffic, Historical and Conservation commissions, the Ambulance Service Committee, the Fire Department and the Planning Board.

Bort keeps Lee High job

After almost 30 Lee High School students, parents and faculty spoke in glowing terms about Dean of Students Kathleen Bort, the Lee School Committee last week voted to keep Bort in the position for the 1991-92 school year.

Fearing that Bort's job was in danger because of possible budget cuts and a possible proposal to eliminate the position, the Lee Educational Association filed a grievance with the School Committee this spring.

But after an executive session meeting between the School Committee and the LEA, the committee unanimously voted to recognize the dean of students position as a teaching position, that Bort would occupy the position in 1991-92 and that annual appointments for the position would be made based on a performance review.

Bort supporters say that in the three years she has filled the position, she has worked diligently and successfully in help-

ing students cope with disciplinary and other problems.

Hodgkins moves to save Berkshire Scenic Railway

State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, is spearheading an effort to preserve the Berkshire Scenic Railway which for the second consecutive summer will be running out of Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee.

Hodgkins is asking Gov. William Weld to assist the non-profit tourist railway in negotiating with Housatonic Railroad of Canaan, Conn., to run the organization's passenger train on the rail line between Pittsfield and Canaan, Conn. He has also mailed letters to residents asking them to support the scenic railway museum.

Ironically, the museum directors were instrumental in assisting Housatonic Railroad Co. buy and receive grants to rehabilitate the Berkshire track this year.

"The Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum was cited by the Berkshire Visitors Bureau as the fastest growing family-oriented attraction in Berkshire County," Hodgkins wrote to Weld. "It has injected hundreds of thousands of dollars into the local economy through not only its impact on tourism but also the significant amounts of money it has spent on construction to rehabilitate the Lenox station and its rail cars. Especially in these tough economic times, Berkshire County needs the Berkshire Scenic Railway to continue to operate."

In a letter to residents, Hodgkins writes: "Our tax dollars are supporting

the Housatonic Railroad, so it is up to us to insist that the governor take action to insure the Berkshire Scenic Railway is permitted to operate on the line....The more people who send letters, the better the chances that the governor will join the fight to save the Berkshire Scenic Railway."

The tourist railway is in the process of restoring the Lenox railroad station, a National Historic site.

Instead of operating the tourist train in the Berkshires as planned this summer, the directors of the scenic railway have made an arrangement to operate scenic tours of Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee from July 14 to Oct. 14.

The railway has been operating along the north-south line periodically for the last six years. However, the line could not be operated this summer because the deteriorated track is being repaired and a disagreement between the railway museum and Housatonic Railroad. Nevertheless, the Scenic Railway Museum at Lenox Station will remain open to visitors this summer on weekends and holidays.

The 45-minute Westover runs will tour the base (off Exit 5 of the Massachusetts Turnpike), with departures at 1, 2 and 3 p.m. Tickets are \$4 adults, \$3 for those over 65 and \$2 for children under 12, with part of the proceeds donated to a charity selected by Westover.

Castronova steps down from Lee DPW

In a major overhaul of the Lee Department of Public Works, three DPW members -- including chairman Joseph Castronova -- have decided not to seek reappointments to the board.

Castronova, Timothy Taylor and John Hughes were not reappointed to the DPW board by the Selectmen this week. The Selectmen appointed Joseph Marino and Robert Marino for two-year terms on the DPW and are seeking a person to fill the remaining position. Maurice Leahey was reappointed by the Selectmen.

The changing of almost half the membership comes after a tumultuous period in the board's history. Under Castronova's chairmanship, the board closely scrutinized activities of the DPW crew claiming that the town needed better performances from employees.

Castronova's actions, however, prompted harsh criticism from DPW workers and several town officials. Castronova in turn criticized the performance of other town officials including Selectmen Chairman Diane Roosa.

walkabout

By
Deidre Consolati



AN OLD BRIDGE IN A PASTORAL SETTING has come under close scrutiny lately and what has become obvious is that Lee people have a soft spot in their hearts for it.

Known as "the bridge at Golden Hill," the span was built in 1885 and is an eye-pleasing semioval like a half-section of a lens or lentil, hence the name *lenticular*. It crosses the Housatonic River in northeast Lee, along a flat section of the river that runs into Lenoxdale. According to the Lee history, the area was formerly called Shea's Crossing, and "the trolley conductor used to sing out 'Shea's Crossing' as he stopped at nearby Bradley Street."

The bridge spans the stream at a spot of great natural beauty. Marshy lowland lines both sides of the road along the approach to the bridge and is a popular spot with birders. In early spring, redwing blackbirds may be seen and heard among the viburnums and witch hazel. Larger migrating birds often use the place as a stopover. Ospreys dazzle viewers with breathtaking plunges into the waters, to carry away large carp in their talons. They alight in the lofty reaches of a stand of dead elms near the bridge and wait patiently for their prey to stop struggling before they begin to feast. Below, in the river, mallard ducks swim in twos and threes, stopping to rest on sandbars upstream of the bridge.

Like Rome, Lee sits on seven hills, and the knoll that rises west of the river and bridge is called Golden Hill.

But Golden Hill is a universe all its own, where — in a sweeping panorama that never fails to draw the viewer into its vastness — the mountains roll from north to south from the foothills of the Green Mountains to Tyringham Valley and beyond as far as the eye can see, like the long, slow surge of an ocean wave frozen in time. From a high meadow on the north side of the hill, the viewer may see a majestic outline: the swelling bosom of Mount Greylock and her sister, Saddleball Mountain.

One of the few working farms left in Lee is situated on the hill, on land leased from Kimberly-Clark Corp. The property occupies the top of Golden Hill along with some residential homes. Steers are pastured here, next to the farmer's cornfield; meadows on the south side are used for haying. The farmer's produce stand sells garden vegetables and sweet corn, and is a large draw for families on the hill and in nearby Lenoxdale.

It came as no surprise, therefore, to anyone aware of Golden Hill's brand of Berkshire magic (whose symbol is the simple little bridge that has been there all these years) that any plans to change the ambience would meet with strong resistance. This was the response when Lee officials unveiled a plan to remove and relocate the bridge and replace it with a state-of-the-art (albeit less attractive) span. The phrase *hit the roof* comes to mind when describing the reaction of Golden Hill families and fans of the bridge who rose up from one end of town to the other.

Judiciously, the selectmen called a hearing. Initially the plan was to "solicit citizen input" before issuing their decision. After hearing all sides they came away appointing an ad hoc committee made up of town-board members and two parties interested in the bridge's fate. Together, they would explore all the options.

Joe and Audie Furgal, longtime residents of Golden Hill, are representative of the many people at the hearing who were outspoken in their view that the bridge should remain exactly where it is. "Our focus has to be on the bridge," declared Joe. "Then we can take the rest of the issues one at a time." Well-known for his upbeat outlook, he added, "Let's not get hysterical instead of historical."

He finished, "I came over the bridge today, with the still water reflecting the bridge. I love the sound. It clanks and clunks like something from the past should. My argument as far as the bridge goes is, the town would have to pay for the cost of moving it. Then there would be the cost of a new bridge (some of which would be paid by the state). Then there would be the cost of upkeep for the old bridge because as a historic structure, it would have to be maintained at a high level. Then, of course, we would have to maintain the new bridge too. So there would be the double cost of both bridges. It makes the most sense to keep the bridge where it is and upgrade it."

Joe echoes the views of a 62-year-old Lee native and resident of Main Street who has seen razing and preservation come full circle in his lifetime. He remarked, "There has been a lot of changes in this town from the razing of the covered bridge in South Lee to the destruction of fine old homes on Park Street for a minimall. Now what is left is doubly precious. Nothing would hurt more than taking away the Golden Hill bridge from where it is right now."

As time goes by...

Deely sees changes, seeks positive outlook for Lee

By Erik Bruun

Martin Deely is the Rip Van Winkle of Lee politics. A selectman for six years during the 1970s, he returned to the board this spring after a 15-year hiatus into a changed world.

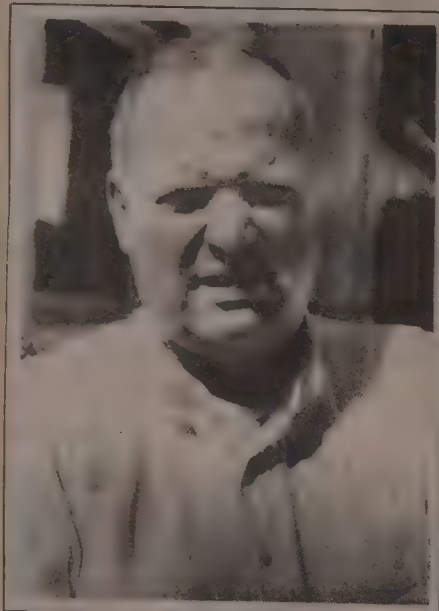
Deely recalls the times when building plans were made over a cup of coffee, a man's word was his bond and a handshake settled disagreements.

Projects were built because people needed water or sewer connections, not because regulations dictated costly changes. And, of course, times were good back then, so the town could afford to meet people's needs.

So when Deely returned to the Board of Selectmen two months ago, he says he was surprised by some of what he found.

"It's different," Deely says. "You used to be able to strike a compromise. People have gotten angrier and nastier on the local level. People have lost their sense of humor about things. If everybody just backs off a little bit and lets things operate, things will be more relaxed. I think that's starting to happen."

Since Deely joined the selectmen, the tone of selectmen's meetings has changed markedly. Deely's predecessor, William D. Bean, was generally regarded as a hard-working,



Martin Deely

Deely sees glass that is half full in Lee

Continued from page 1

Since Deely joined the selectmen, the tone of selectmen's meetings has changed markedly. Deely's predecessor, William D. Bean, was generally regarded as a hard-working, combative and diligent selectman. But after six years on the job, Bean had knocked heads with several people in Lee politics. Deely, who is president of Lee Lime Corp., has come with a clean slate and a jovial sense of humor. Rather than fight it out with a person who has a different point of view, Deely prefers to simply disagree and then crack a joke or offer to go out for coffee with the person.

"Just because you disagree doesn't mean you have to fight about it," Deely says. "There has to be a sense of teamwork rather than a sense of fighting. That was true in the past. There are some very, very good people in town government, so I know we have the people in place."

Deely has high praise for his fellow selectmen and colleagues — Selectmen Diane Roosa and Joseph F. DuPont, Town Clerk Patricia Carlino and Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scoloro.

"The one thing that hasn't changed since I left is that the town wouldn't run without Pete," Deely says. "I don't think there is anyone who has done as much for this town as he has. If anyone has a problem, the first thing they do is run to Pete."

What has changed, though, is the regulatory atmosphere of town government. Almost every other issue that comes before the board is referred to Town Counsel Jerome Scully.

"The world's gotten more complicated," he says. "Since I've gotten on I've noticed an omnipresence of regulations in the town's life. We're always reacting to regulations. I don't see any sense in complaining about it. It's like complaining about playing baseball in the rain. Everybody out there is in the rain."

Nevertheless, Deely says regulations have restricted what selectmen can and cannot do. Proposition 2 1/2 has limited the town's fiscal freedom, he says. Also, regulations means it takes a lot longer to get things accomplished, he says.

Deely says he supports hiring a town administrator to help overcome those problems.

"We're a small town dealing with all the problems of a big town," Deely says. "We need to go to a town manager for that professionalism. Just like always having to go to Jerry [Scully], we need to have someone who is familiar with the regulations. You used to be able to get away with being a little lax, but you can't anymore."

Financially, the town is not in as good shape as it used to be, Deely says, and matters have been made worse by the loss of federal revenue-sharing money. Federal money, he says, used to pay for all the capital projects that are now being postponed in the face of Lee's financial squeeze.

But, being a man who prefers to view a glass as being half full rather than half empty, Deely says the town really is in pretty good condition when it comes to municipal services.

"There were some tricky things that had to get done in the past and they were. We're benefiting from that now. Things are done and paid for. The basic infrastructure is there. The pipes aren't exploding in the streets," he says.

He adds that he sees more participation in town affairs, a trend that he attributes in part to the aging of the activist college students of the 1960s and early 1970s. "There's a lot more activism out there," he says. "The town needs people who want to get involved."

"What's so nifty about town government is you get to know a lot of people and you get to know them well. It's like going to boot camp together. There's a shared experience. It's so much better when you take a positive approach and work together."

Collaborative Approves Reorganization

Record 7-5-91

By Andy Moro
Special to The Record

STOCKBRIDGE — The Board of Directors of the Southern Berkshire Educational Collaborative voted to approve the reorganization of the administrative staff at its June meeting.

The collaborative, serving the Lenox, Lee, Berkshire Hills Regional and Southern Berkshire

Regional School Districts, was developed in order to offer additional vocational skills training to all area high school students.

Due to the continued reduction in state aid to local school districts, the board requested that the superintendents from the four districts that make up the collaborative develop cost saving methods in order to save the program.

The position of Executive Director was eliminated and replaced by a part-time coordinator. James Secundy, a long-time employee of the collaborative, was appointed to the position. Joseph Vigna, who served as the executive director for the past year, will be leaving the district to pursue other career opportunities in the education field.

Jack Komer, Director of Career Education at Monument Mountain Regional High School will take on the additional responsibilities as Vocational Supervisor of the Food Service Program, a student operated restaurant which is open to the public two days a week at the Masonic Hall in Great Barrington.

James Gralla, Director of Vocational Education at Lee High School will act as the Vocational Supervisor of the Allied Health Program. Based at the Berkshire Community College South County Campus, that program utilized the resources of a variety of health care facilities and provides broad based health training.

The internship program, which provides a variety of community placements will continue to operate with the administration of the program being supervised by the individual schools.

Lee lacks EMT and firefighting insurance

Detecting a potentially disastrous problem for the town, Lee Civil Defense Director Kenneth LaBier told the Lee Selectmen Monday that the town does not have liability insurance for its emergency medical technicians and firefighters.

Although the town has a general liability insurance, the policy does not cover EMTs or firefighters performing their professional duties.

"If a person is carrying a stretcher and he drops it, the town would be covered," LaBier says. "But if an EMT provided any kind of professional treatment, he would not be covered."

After researching different policies with John Toole, owner of Lawrence V. Toole Insurance Agency, LaBier said a policy could be bought for \$3,000. The Selectmen, surprised by LaBier's news, said the town should buy the policy.

City & Town

Lee's financial problems could go

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Like many other towns, Lee is on the brink of losing more state aid and revenue-producing authority under the new state budget than it expected to lose as little as three weeks ago.

The drop in Chapter 70 education aid and in so-called additional-assistance allotments, for example, totaled \$224,005 when the state Department of Revenue sent out its preliminary report in March. Now, under the budget agreed to by the Legislature on Sunday, the loss in these two state-aid sources comes to \$308,036.

Furthermore, the town is on the verge of having to allot \$8,000 to \$10,000 to federal Social Security taxes for part-time employees who must now be included in the Social Security system or must be participants in an adequate pension or retirement system that meets federal muster.

Finally, the \$140,000 set aside this year as the town's overlay for tax abatements and exemptions may have to be included in the tax-cap computation, thus forcing the town to make additional expenditure cuts.

At least that's the way the financial dominoes appear to be falling in light of action on the state budget and the possible veto by Gov. William F. Weld of the overlay exemption.

But Town Treasurer Patricia D. Carlino said yesterday the picture is not all that bleak. Certainly not yet.

For one thing, she said, the losses in Chapter 70 and additional-assistance allotments have been offset, coincidentally, by the state's distribution of two years' worth of Chapter 81 highway funds, a total of \$138,938. The money comes as reimbursement for sums spent or allocated for road improvements and therefore frees up that amount for general purposes.

In addition, lottery distributions are expected to be up from \$336,000 to \$403,000, another boon.

No town match

And although the new Social Security requirement, which took effect Monday, could have taken \$8,000 to \$10,000 out of the budget, the bulk of the town's part-time employees appear ready to sign up for what is called a deferred compensation plan, Carlino said. If so, it would do away with the

Social Security obligation.

The deferred compensation plan being offered is one managed by Public Employees Benefit Services Corp. of Salem. A deduction amounting to 6 percent of an employee's gross pay is put into an interest-bearing, tax-deferred account. Unlike Social Security, the town is not required to put up a matching amount, which is where the saving comes in, Carlino said.

There are about 100 part-time workers — like lifeguards, special police officers and substitute teachers — in Lee. Those who

join the new plan can withdraw their contributions when their employment ends, she said.

But the point, she added, is that the part-timers can be covered by a pension plan that meets new federal requirements. Thirty-two permanent and full-time employees are already members of county or state retirement systems and are not targets of the new standard, she said.

Where does this leave the town and its finances? The answer is still unclear, Carlino said, because the state has yet to distribute the full cherry sheets that

set forth the receipts, like state aid, and the assessments, like county taxes and teachers' pension payments, that each town uses to compute its final budget figures.

A major concern remains the status of the overlay money, Carlino acknowledged.

Lee adopted an \$8.56 million budget at the annual town meeting in May, but voters four days later rejected about \$238,000 of it by refusing to enact an override of the tax-levy limit.

Accounts whittled

Since then, town departments have made some voluntary cuts that, together with savings in insurance outlays, have whittled the \$238,000 down to nearly zero. But part of the whittling, Carlino conceded, relied on the exclusion of the overlay account from the tax-cap computation. Putting it

back in, which is what would happen under a Weld veto, would mean that the levy limit would have to be reduced by that much more.

But there is still a possible ace up the state's — or the town's — sleeve, Carlino observed. The preliminary data on local aid to the town does not include a reimbursement total under the heading "all other cherry sheet programs."

In the fiscal year that ended Sunday, that total was \$130,900. Even an amount close to that this year would go a long way toward solving the town's budget dilemma, she said. The frustration lies in the waiting.

Town Counsel Jerome J. Scully, meanwhile, said that although the new budget is out of balance, it still is an approved budget and the town can continue to operate as it normally would.

The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, July 4, 1991 — B5

from bad to worse

Castronova gives up Lee post after controversial BPW term

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Board of Public Works, a statutory body created in 1970, lost an outspoken and controversial member this week when Joseph Castronova, who has been chairman for the past year, ended his tenure on the board without seeking reappointment.

He said yesterday that he did not want to serve any more but that he expected to be visible as an observer at Selectmen's meetings. "I'll be out there agitating" is the way he put it.

He and at least two members of the Board of Selectmen, Diane P. Roosa and Joseph F. Dupont, have not been on the most harmonious of terms in the past year, Castronova acknowledged.

He has been on the Board of Public Works since 1986, his second stretch on the appointive body. The first was from 1970 to 1975, the first years the board met.

In the past year, he was at the center of a succession of disputes over the Department of Public Works' management, which occasionally brought him into conflict with the Selectmen and with unionized DPW employees. Among the issues were negotiations for a new contract and an abortive attempt to employ a professional negotiator in the process.

Unfunded hiring

Criticized as being largely responsible for hiring the negotiator without having appropriated funds for the purpose, Castronova has fired back that he has been a target of half-truths and misinformation.

Most recently, he has asked for copies of minutes from Selectmen's executive sessions connected to DPW contract negotiations. On Monday night, he received two of them, from sessions of Jan. 24 and Feb. 28 of this year. Minutes do not exist for the other two sessions, held Jan. 11 and 18, 1990, said Roosa, the present Selectmen chairman. "No one took minutes at those," she said.

Castronova says his main interest is in making sure officials are adhering to the state's open meeting law and are releasing executive-session minutes once negotiations are complete.

He is one of three members of the seven-member board whose terms expired with the 1991 fiscal year, which ended Sunday. Others are Timothy O. Taylor, who, like Castronova, did not seek reappointment; and Maurice Leahy, who on Monday night was reappointed to a three-year term.

To succeed Taylor and Castronova, the Selectmen named Robert Bartini, a roofing con-

tractor, and Joseph Marino, a former GE employee, both of whom said they want to serve on the board. A fourth member, John Hughes, resigned in April, and an advertisement will be placed in The Penny Saver or South Advocate for persons interested in filling the position.

Most other persons in appointive positions or who serve on appointive boards were reappointed Monday night, with a couple of exceptions. One was Joseph Puleri, a member of the Cable Television Committee, who had not sought reappointment. In his place, the Selectmen named former Selectman William D. Bean.

The other was John J. Ray, town gas inspector, who is stepping down. His post will be advertised.



Brian Sullivan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

All-Berkshire tennis

Pam Piretti of Lenox was named the most valuable player in the Berkshire County girls' tennis league. Members of the All-Berkshire team include, from left, FRONT ROW — Mandy Lahey and Marie DiNunzio of Lee, Piretti and Sherry Zabian of Lenox. BACK ROW — Sarah Johnson of Pittsfield, Katie Fairbanks of Wahconah, Michelle Boyer of Hoosac, Cressie Hedgecock of Pittsfield and Natalie Winnett of Pittsfield. Also on the team but not pictured are Rhonda Nixon of Lee and Jen Stolfo of Lenox.

Record 7-5-91 Lee Welcomes Bank

LEE — "I think we should take this opportunity to welcome the Great Barrington Savings Bank to Lee," said selectman Martin Deely, upon the board's approval of a sign permit for the bank.

The bank will be located in the building formerly occupied by the Bank of New England.

To the selectmen's pleasure, the bank is removing the building's two fluorescent signs and replacing them with a more subtle look.

The new signs will be hand-carved with raised bronze detail on a white background.

The branch will join ones in Sheffield, West Stockbridge, and Great Barrington to mark the bank's fourth location in South Berkshire County.

Lee's Nixon and DiNunzio, both seniors, were another first-team selection who were paired for the first time. The Wildcats punctuated their matches with overhead slams that usually registered winning points. The strategy was simple — serve, volley and hit the overhead winner.

Playing either both up or both back, the Lee team communicated well, hit good groundstrokes and played well at the net. Nixon and DiNunzio were seeded fourth at the Western Mass. individuals.

Lahey, who is a junior, was featured at No. 1 singles for the Lee team this year. Lahey continued to improve as the season went along and played some of her best tennis in the season's final weeks. Lahey's strengths were a strong two-hand backhand and her ability to get to the ball early and return with power and accuracy.

Lee Central School Lists Students on Honor Roll

Record 7-5-91

LEE—Lee Central School has released its fourth-quarter honor roll for students in grades five through eight.

Students listed on the high honor roll have all A's or better in major subjects and B's or better in minor subjects, while those on the honor roll have at least B's or better in major and minor subjects.

GRADE 5

HIGH HONORS: Kate Bailey, Erika Baluk, Jennifer Brittain, Robin Cody, Thomas Felten, Amanda Hess, Amy Hunt, Michael Kalinowski, Jennifer O'Neil, Kerry Scheurer, Andrew Shaw, Sarah Towne, and Peter Wise.

HONORS: Allan Armstrong, Christine Bissell, Nicholas Boldyga, Jeffrey Guidice, Tanya Hawley, Matthew Kelly, Adrienne Laval, Shannon LeCompte, Terry Lorange, Erin McDarby, Jodi Pixley, Nicole Smith, Sarah Sullivan, Avi Verdi, and Jeffrey Wells.

GRADE 6

HIGH HONORS: Kristina Brock, Katherine O'Neil, and Kristen Scheurer.

HONORS: Cristina Conso-lati, Dawn Donnelly, Sarah Fix, David Forrest, Alan Hebert, Patti Hedge, Jesse Horsford, Benjamin Hunter, Dana Korn, Gregory Krupka, John Mitchell, Stephanie Roosa, Scott Walker, Brendan Walsh, and Jessica Wilcox.

GRADE 7

HIGH HONORS: Kurt Baluk, Kirsten Barnatchez, Regina Brazee, Sean Burt,

Joshua Crawford, Timothy DiMario, Joseph Dinan, Jonathan Geldert, Cecily Gould, April Hubbard, Gina Impoco, Jason Kokoszka, Tabitha Martin, James Moffat, Marni Nicholas, Vaishali Patel, Patricia Schwab, Jessica Sinopoli, and Shannon Williams.

HONORS: Jennifer Felten, Mandee Kelly, Jennifer Kilmer, Kelly Loring, Peter Montgomery, Renee Perusse, Shannon Plaquet, Nina Pixley, Jaime Rauch, Daryl Roberts, Michael Spalinger, April Strickland, and Kimberly Wheeler.

GRADE 8

HIGH HONORS: Megan Bachteler, Christopher Tisdale, and Stephanie Wescott.

HONORS: Joseph Abderhalden, Christopher Brittain, Kristen Coty, Lori Curtin, Carrie Gangell, Amy Goebel, Joseph Impoco, Maureen Kennedy, Mark Mitchell, Thomas Scheurer, and Todd Tyer.

Federal officials to assess Scenic Railway, track safety

Eagle 7-9-91

LEE — State Sen. Jane M. Swift, R-North Adams, will meet Thursday at Sullivan Station with officials of the Federal Railroad Administration to discuss track conditions and the safety of passengers on the Berkshire Scenic Railway.

The time of the meeting was not announced.

A prepared statement from Swift's office said that the visit by the federal authorities is the result of a meeting held in May at which John Hanlon, president of the Housatonic Railroad, and John Herbert, president of Berkshire Scenic Railway, aired differing views on issues including public safety, insurance and liability.

The tracks are owned by Housatonic Railroad and Berkshire Scenic Railway operates on them.

Swift's statement said that the FRA officials plan to inspect the tracks and determine whether they are suitable for passenger travel. In addition, Berkshire Scenic Railway's equipment will be inspected to determine com-

pliance with FRA regulations.

Swift said that she has been trying to reconcile the concerns of the two parties since last year, and she is pleased that federal authorities are willing to help resolve the matter.

"Although I recognize and appreciate the great service that Berkshire Scenic provides not only to the residents of Berkshire County, but to the great many tourists who visit the area, I believe it is my duty to demand that all safety concerns are thoroughly investigated by the appropriate authorities in order to ensure public safety," the senator's statement said.

Resident protests Lee antenna plan; Selectmen may call public hearing

By Gerald B. O'Connor

Berkshire Eagle Staff 7-9-91

LEE — What appeared two weeks ago to be an acceptable way around this town's opposition to cellular-telephone antennas moved toward failure last night as a Fairview Street resident chastised the Selectmen for not holding a public hearing on the matter.

William Roche of 555 Fairview St., who said his house is near where four cellular-telephone antennas might be erected atop the town's new water tower, said that such an installation was prohibited when the water tower was approved.

"I'm not upset," Roche told the Selectmen, "but we fought this down six months ago. Now it's back. Where do you stop?"

Expect to hold hearing

Roche voiced his opposition in such strong terms that the Selectmen ultimately said they would undoubtedly schedule a hearing on the proposal.

The proposal was made to the Selectmen two weeks ago by Berkshire Cellular Inc., a Pittsfield-based company formed by Nynex Mobile Communications Inc. of Albany, N.Y., and the Richmond Telephone Co.

The firm last January had proposed renting land in Lee near the Massachusetts Turnpike and erecting on it a tower on which to mount an antenna or antennas for cellular telephone service.

Residents who live near the turnpike, however, leapt to oppose the plan, citing the furor a year and a half earlier when a company called Metro Mobile Communications Inc. had started

to erect similar towers on Massachusetts Turnpike Authority land without having sought local approval.

The uproar made statewide headlines and propelled Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, into the role of Jack the Giant Killer when Metro Mobile was forced to take the towers down.

A year ago, Berkshire Cellular, a Metro Mobile competitor, proposed putting four slender antennas on top of the town water tower, but the town's waterworks consultant, Tighe & Bond Inc. of Holyoke, said such an installation would induce what is called a cathodic current in the steel tower, a current that could accelerate corrosion.

Called potential problem

The cathodic-current issue was raised a week ago by Timothy O. Taylor, a Devon Road resident who is an electrical engineer, on grounds that it was a potential problem that ought to be addressed before a permit is granted.

Then last night Roche said that the Planning Board last year recommended a prohibition — ultimately approved, Roche said — against putting up any additional equipment or structures on or around the water tower. No one from the Planning Board was present, so the prohibition was not confirmed, but Taylor, who was contacted afterward by telephone, said Tighe & Bond had contended in a written opinion to the Board of Public Works last year that the state grant program through which the town received money to build the tower had imposed its own prohibition to

that effect.

Selectman Martin H. Deely told Roche that the Selectmen had written Roche, as well as other residents of the area, letters letting them know about the latest Berkshire Cellular plan in order to bring any opposition to light.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa said a hearing will have to be held if other residents voice concerns. She said she had already received one such telephone call.

Selectman Joseph F. Dupont said the Selectmen have not made a commitment on the plan.

"Let's face it," said Deely, "we are interested in the money the town might get from this. But obviously there are other concerns."

He spoke of the revenue the town would receive from a proposed lease of the water tower to Berkshire Cellular: \$240,000 over a period of 20 years.

Roche called this a "measly" amount.

Erection of a building to house electrical equipment to supply the antennas, together with vehicular traffic generated to provide service for the equipment would spoil the privacy of the area, Roche maintained.

"I bought in a residential-agricultural zone because I wanted privacy," he said. "It would be cheaper to put it on the towers [already] on the turnpike."

Other business

In other action, the Selectmen:

► Approved a tag sale Aug. 9 and 10 for the benefit of the Lee Visiting Nurse Association at the town skating rink. They also authorized a temporary sign for the event.

The class of '31 comes back

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

BECKET — Their ranks are thinning now, but the friendships they forged at Lee High School 60 years ago show little sign of weakening. Proving it, 15 of them, more than one-third of the school's 39-member graduating class of 1931, gathered yesterday at Walter Raith's summer home in the Village at Sherwood Greens to have a couple of drinks, eat a steak dinner and do some reminiscing.

Raith, observed classmate Bill Crittendon of Otis, "was our class president and he just carried on beautifully" as the reunion organizer.

"He started sending us letters in January," smiled Betty Brunot of Swampscott. She was Betty Pease when she graduated and left Lee to enroll at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Indeed, Raith, who in the winter-time lives in Katonah, N.Y., appears to be one of the better organized persons around. He not only wrote to all the living members of the class but rented a marquee and enlisted the aid of his equally well-organized daughter, Sandra Green, and her friend Thomas Catalina, also from Katonah, to put up the tables, make the hors d'oeuvres, obtain presents for everyone, tie orange and black (the school colors) balloons around the yard and cook the dinner on an outdoor grill.

Some came from afar

Most of the class members live close by, but a couple came from some distance. And several said that during their working lives, they had lived at considerable distances from the Berkshires.

Crittendon, for example, left Lee for Norwich University in Northfield, Vt., was president of his graduating class there and then served in the Army during World War II. He was with the 2nd and 8th armored divisions that were in battles across Europe. He was discharged a lieutenant colonel.

He began to recite some of the stops in his subsequent business career — a vice president of Bay State Elevator Co. in Springfield; general manager of a Goodyear Rubber Co. plant in Auburn, Maine; division manager for Standard Electric Time Co. in Springfield — when he happened to mention that he had also managed his own business, a perfume mail-order company.

"You did, Bill?" asked Florence Consolati of Lee, who had been Florence Schuck when they were classmates.

"Sure," said Crittendon without skipping a beat. "I'll bring you a sam-

REUNION, continued on B5



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Andre Jaouens was among the happy Lee High alumni at a reunion in Becket yesterday.

ple next time."

He pointed to the sneakers on his feet, noticeable for red and white stripes running lengthwise down the toe and white-on-blue stars around the lacings. "They're 15 years old," he said. "Those are sneakers we made at Goodyear in Auburn. I wear them each year on Fourth of July weekend."

Inez Peron, on the other hand, lives in the house where she was born. "I'm going to be 79 soon," she said. Her maiden name was Zanetti.

There was a four-year period, she conceded, when she lived in Tyringham, but she returned to Lee afterward.

"There have been a lot of changes," she said. "Lee was a town of 3,000 people when we were in school. Now it's about 6,500." For decades, it has been a paper-mill town, she said. "All my family worked in those mills."

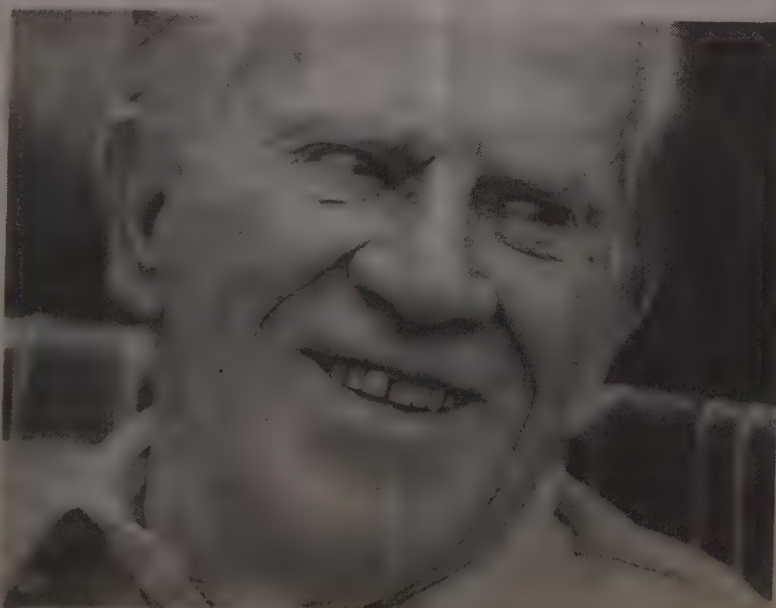
Her husband, John Peron, worked for the Peter J. Schweitzer Co. for 27 years, she said, and

'You could get married on \$36 a week.'

although he receives a pension, it remains fixed while prices continually rise. "In 17 years," she said, "there has been only a \$20 raise. It doesn't go up with inflation." She says that her father, who worked in the same mills for 44 years, received no pension at all.

"I don't know how they did it," she said, speaking of her parents. "But they got along. They had a garden, and chickens and rabbits and things like that."

At the time the class of 1931 graduated, money and incomes weren't spoken of in the same volumes that they are today. "You could get married on \$36 a week," said Albert Brunot, whose wife,



William Crittendon was there in his 15-year-old Fourth of July sneakers.



Photos by Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Charlotte Pease Davis, Lee High class of 1932, left, leans in to say hello to old classmates, Beatrice Rowley, center, and

Elizabeth Trimels. Sylvia Rod Kleban, class of '31, who rode to school with the mailman, is in the background.

Betty, is one of the class-of-'31 graduates.

Albert had gone to Cornell University and met his future wife in Carthage, N.Y., where she was teaching home economics. He was a mechanical engineer and had gone to work for General Electric Co. in Schenectady, N.Y., he said, for 70 cents an hour.

The couple moved to eastern Massachusetts in 1939 when he transferred to the GE works in Lynn, and they eventually settled in Swampscott. Of the 15 of her classmates who came to the reunion, she was one of two to

come the farthest. The other was Oliver Slocum from Guilford, Conn.

Graduated at Town Hall

In 1931, Lee High School was in what is now called Lee Central School. "We graduated in Memorial Town Hall, upstairs," said Beatrice Rowley Loring of Otis.

"There was not enough room in the school," added Elizabeth Cain Trimels.

Sylvia Kleban of Great Barrington, who was Sylvia Rod of Otis when she went to Lee High, said she used to ride from Otis with the town mailman. She thinks his last name was Decker but cannot remember his first. Eventually, he bought a bus and transported students in it.

Sylvia graduated from the University of Massachusetts when it was Massachusetts State College, then worked for a year in the Brooklyn, N.Y., Jewish Hospital

to become a laboratory technician.

She also worked in a restaurant to pay her bills, because her work in the hospital, she said, was without pay. "That's the way you learned to be a lab technician," she said.

She later studied for a master's degree and became a teacher and reading specialist. She is proud to report, she added, that her three grandchildren "all are excellent readers and do you want to know why? It's because they didn't have TV in their houses."

It was the seventh reunion that Raith, a retired store proprietor and one-time district supervisor for the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. in the Katonah area, has organized since 1971, first on an every-fifth-year basis and then every other year.

"I keep corresponding every year with them," said Raith. "That's how we keep together."

The 1931 alumni, besides those

already named, were Andre W. Jaouen of Lee, Miles DeForest of Dalton, Robert A. Heath of Springfield, John Consolati and W. Russell Seff, both of Lee, and Victoria Wesevitz Gralla of Housatonic.

Four members of the class of 1932 were also present. Raith first invited them last year. The 1932 alumni were Anthony J. DiSimoni, Charlotte Pease Davis and Marie Messina Simone, all of Lee, and Raymond T. Connors of Pittsfield.

With wives and husbands included, there were 27 people in attendance.

But their numbers are dwindling and many of those remaining were ill or too weak to attend the get-together yesterday afternoon, Raith said, adding that it may be the last.

"To tell you the truth, I've got to stop. My own health isn't what it used to be, and it's hard to get anyone to help."

Lee officials, Vicon will confer on possible incineration of waste

Eagle 7-11-91
By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Lee's Board of Public Works will learn Monday night that the life of the rapidly filling landfill can be extended — and capital investments deferred — if the town wants to burn its rubbish instead of bury it.

An outline of what this would entail in terms of commitment and cost, advantage and disadvantage will be presented to the board at 7:30 p.m. by Llewellyn E. Clark, manager of the Vicon Recovery Associates incinerator in Pittsfield.

Lee's superintendent of public works, J. Peter Scolforo, asked Clark to meet with the board because, he said, it's time to think of the waste-disposal path the town wants to pursue.

Scolforo said the landfill on Woodland Road has perhaps two to three years' capacity left. And while the town meeting a year ago authorized a bond issue of slightly more than \$1 million for the acquisition of an additional 27 acres at the landfill, he said the implementation of that borrowing and the attendant cost of development will add significant financial obligations to the budget in a time of austerity, belt-tightening and shrinkage.

Any extension of the landfill will be more costly than anything in the past because, under new regulations taking effect next year, all landfills will have to be lined and outfitted with such things as leachate collection facilities.

Vicon has a contract with Pittsfield to dispose of city solid waste and to sell the steam it generates to Crane & Co. of Dalton. Vicon has memorandums of understanding with seven other communities to receive and burn

their waste as well, and Lee could become the eighth memorandum signer.

Doing so could obviate need for new landfill development right away, although Scolforo says he would advocate going forward with the land purchase anyway. One-third of the land-acquisition cost would be borne by Mead Corp., whose Specialty Paper Division would want to bury waste there.

Vicon's memorandums say that at times when trash volume reaches the incinerator's capacity, the towns holding the memorandums will have to revert to landfilling their trash or disposing of it in other ways until the volume declines again.

Impact of recycling

Whereas Pittsfield's trash sometimes filled the incinerator to capacity a few years ago, said Clark yesterday, it rarely does today. Furthermore, he said, "I don't anticipate it doing so."

The principal reason, he said, is the introduction of curbside recycling in Pittsfield and adjacent towns more than a year ago.

"Our volume of waste has declined measurably," Clark said.

Although recycling has not accounted for the 25 percent reduction in solid waste that is the minimum state goal, he continued, it now accounts for about 20 percent of residential waste.

More recently, the county's depressed economy has resulted in further reduction in waste generation locally, said Clark, who added that if communities vigorously pursue not only recycling, but composting and what is called resource reduction — cutting down on waste by eliminating use of containers and the like beforehand — volumes can be reduced further.

The costs are something else. Lee will weigh these. The spot-market tipping fee at Vicon and most commercial landfills at present is \$70 a ton, normally the highest rate. Contracts and memorandums of understanding usually result in lesser prices.

The communities that dispose of their waste at Vicon are Lenox, Lanesboro, Tyringham, Richmond, Dalton, Hinsdale and, most recently, Washington.

The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, July 11, 1991 — B7

Charter's death was appropriate, Hodgkins asserts

By Mary-Jane Tichenor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — State Rep. Christopher Hodgkins, D-Lee, said yesterday that the charter proposed in 1988 to replace the current three-member County Commission and the County Advisory Board of mayors and selectmen with a nine-member county council and full-time administrator died an appropriate death because "at the time every town in Berkshire County passed a motion opposing the charter reform."

Freshman state Sen. Jane M. Swift, R-North Adams, said Tuesday that she favors putting that charter before voters instead of pursuing a non-binding referendum on whether county government should continue.

"To my knowledge, every legislator in Berkshire County was against it," said Hodgkins. "It was very much a step backward for county government."

The charter proposed to take the Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission and place it under the auspices of the County Commissioners, he said.

'Seemed ridiculous'

"At a time when we can't even get a quorum at our advisory board meetings, it seemed ridiculous to place the Berkshire County regional planning agency, which has what I believe the largest responsibilities in county government, under the County Commission."

He cited the old adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," in refer-

ring to BCRPC, celebrating its 25th year in 1991.

The BCRPC is working very well, said Hodgkins: "It's accountable to every single town, and people are enthused about participating."

But, he said, in the case of charter reform, "We acted as legislators listening to our constituency," and every one of the 32 towns in the county said they were against the charter reform, he said.

He plans on filing legislation on the non-binding referendum that was requested by the county commissioners. "And I'll be asking Jane [Swift] to join me because there's no doubt that we can work together on this issue," Hodgkins said.

"If there's an initiative from the county to do another charter process, I'm always willing to re-examine and revisit the issue of county government," he said.

"But in the case of the 1988 charter, it was a pathetic attempt to disfigure county government. It died a healthy death, and that's where it should remain — in the grave."

No scenic train this year

Lingering problems kill the dream

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

7/12/92

LEE — Any hopes that the Berkshire Scenic Railway will be back on the tracks this summer were dashed yesterday at the conclusion of a sometimes testy and frequently interruptive four-way meeting here.

But the good news, if that's the right way to put it, is that officials of the Scenic Railway and the company that owns the track agreed to work toward an agreement in the next 10 months or so that might lead to resumption of operation next summer.

"We'd like to come together," said John W. Herbert, president of the Lenox-based Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum.

"We'll work on it," said John R. Hanlon Jr., president of Housatonic Railroad Co. of Canaan, Conn., which in January purchased the approximately 35 miles of railroad that lie between



Berkshire Scenic Railway President John Herbert, left, makes a point in yesterday's talks.

TRACKS, continued on B3

■ TRACKS, from B1

Canaan and Pittsfield.

The Scenic Railway, a volunteer organization that began offering train rides to tourists in 1984 from Lee to Great Barrington and back, did not operate in 1990 because of opposition by the then owner of the track, Guilford Transportation Industries. Guilford cited the deteriorated condition of the track and company fear of liability in case of passenger injury, even though Berkshire Scenic had liability insurance.

The insurance was inadequate, Guilford contended.

With purchase of the line on Jan. 10 by Hanlon and Housatonic, public hopes were raised that the Scenic Railway would be back in business. Hanlon was viewed as sympathetic because he managed his own scenic, or tourist, rail service in Connecticut.

But there have been problems, as became evident yesterday at Sullivan's Station in Lee, the former railroad station-turned-restaurant where Herbert, Hanlon and an extensive cast of characters, including representatives of the Federal Railway Administration, came together in an effort to bridge problems of safety, liability, operating protocol and clearly confusing communications that, based on copies of letters that were passed back and forth, showed that a federal interpretation of the Scenic Railway's status as recently as May 3 has since been reversed.

The gathering, beginning at 10 a.m. in the sun-drenched parking area south of the station, soon turned into a media event that finally broke up when Herbert, Hanlon and most of the others went inside the station restaurant to talk privately.

Aiming for 1992

When they emerged about 45 minutes later, the two central figures said they concurred that restoration of the tourist train service this summer is out of the question but that they would work for a 1992 resumption of service.

But there appear still to be a bunch of ifs.

Joseph Beaton, who acted throughout the morning as a mediator, said it is too late in the season for rehabilitation of the section of track over which Berkshire Scenic wants to run, but he got assurances from Hanlon and Herbert that they would continue talks toward a contract.

Beaton, an employee of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, was there on behalf of the state Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, which contracts with the MBTA to provide personnel and expertise on railroad issues.

He said that Berkshire Scenic and Housatonic still must resolve what he called "land issues" and issues of liability and performance. But most important, he said, is that "communications between the two presidents have to get under way."

Herbert said later the issues are "very, very complex," and to laymen, this seemed to be a fair statement. The main points were these:

► Rehabilitation of the track has begun and has progressed northward from Canaan into Sheffield where a major commercial client of Housatonic Railroad, Sheffield Plastics Inc., requires freight service. "We are moving up the line," said Hanlon, "but we haven't got here yet."

Herbert said Berkshire Scenic would offer to hire a contractor to repair the 15-mile section between Lee and Great Barrington that the Scenic Railway uses, but Hanlon said his company could not have such critical work performed by a third party. Furthermore, structural material, like custom-built bridge supports, take time to design and fabricate. Many such members have been ordered, he said, but have not arrived.

Scenic Rail's Right of Way To Be Studied By Officials

Record 7-12-91

By Christine Burns

LEE — Local, state and federal officials have agreed to participate in a joint meeting of the minds to debate the long-standing issue surrounding the Berkshire Scenic Railway's right to use the stretch of train tracks between Lee and Lenox which is currently owned by the Housatonic Railroad.

The Berkshire Scenic Railway has operated on that line, albeit somewhat controversially, since 1984 when the line was owned by Guilford Transportation.

► Berkshire Scenic must now meet safety standards for its rolling stock — locomotives and cars — that only a few months ago it had not expected to have to meet. This is because Berkshire Scenic has now been designated a part of the "general railway system," an FRA term that embraces railroads that connect with each other and provide avenues for traffic going from destination to destination.

Herbert displayed a typed letter from the former chief of safety of the FRA, Joseph W. Walsh, written May 3, that said Berkshire Scenic "doesn't appear to be part of the general railway system."

But less than an hour earlier, Mark McKeon, regional FRA director from Boston, one of the several FRA officials present, said Berkshire Scenic indeed is part of the general system.

Despite this change of status, Herbert said the Scenic Railway has no choice but to meet the standards. He and Hanlon agreed several times that safety was important and federal regulations

would be observed. Both also said federal safety standards, embracing everything from signaling and braking ability to drug testing of locomotive engineers, have been considerably stiffened since a major railroad-passenger accident in Maryland in 1986.

► The need to rehabilitate the track between Lenox, where the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum is located, and Great Barrington and to put the Scenic Railway back in business is the main interest of Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, who said the granting of \$1 million in federal assistance and \$378,000 in state assistance to Housatonic Railroad was a direct result of public pressure on people like the late U.S. Rep. Silvio O. Conte, who was the main force in obtaining the federal aid.

State Sen. Jane M. Swift, R-North Adams, who had planned to be present yesterday, said she had an unexpected commitment in Boston but sent her chief of staff, Christine Banks, to state Swift's concerns for safety and liability protection of both rail-service providers.

"As you know," she said in a telephone conversation from Boston, "you can be sued even if you are in compliance with federal regulations."

"Our dream," said Hodgkins, "is some day to have passenger

service again from New York to the Berkshires."

► The Scenic Railway, in negotiating a contract with Housatonic, will seek waivers of some of the federal regulations, like one dealing with the intensity of locomotive headlights — the railway does not run at night — but won't compromise on basic safety measures, Herbert said.

The brusque tenor of the discussion in its early stages was illustrated by an exchange between Hanlon and Herbert at one point.

"Housatonic offered to provide a locomotive and crew to pull the Scenic Railway cars," said Hanlon.

"This is the first I've heard of that," said Herbert.

"No, it isn't. You've heard that before," Hanlon replied.

When the conversation moved into arguments over real estate ownership and what one lawyer said to another, Hanlon said, "This may sound like Trivial Pursuit, but it's all very serious stuff."

Lee officials consider burning trash at Vicon

By D.R. Bahlman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

7/19/91

LEE — The Selectmen, the DPW board and a representative of Vicon Resource Recovery Associates talked trash last night, and town officials agreed to start the process of deciding whether to make Lee Vicon's newest customer.

Llewellyn E. Clark, manager of Pittsfield-based Vicon, said that the introduction of curbside recycling in Pittsfield and adjacent towns has significantly reduced the amount of waste going into the firm's incinerators.

Because of this reduction, which Clark also attributed to the county's depressed economy, it is unlikely that waste from Lee would be turned away from Vicon, which it probably would have been several years ago when the incinerators were running at capacity.

Landfill costs

J. Peter Scolforo, the town's superintendent of public works, has said that the landfill on Woodlawn Road has perhaps two to three years of useful life left.

While a town meeting in 1990 authorized a bond issue of just more than \$1 million for the acquisition of an additional 27 acres at the landfill, Scolforo said that the costs of implementing that borrowing, as well as the development costs, will put a heavy demand on town finances.

An extension of the landfill will be more costly than anything in the past because new state regulations that take effect in 1992 require that all landfills be lined and outfitted with devices such as leachate collection facilities.

Last night, Clark explained that Vicon,

waste is accepted at Vicon.

However, Clark stressed that it is unlikely that Lee haulers would ever be turned away.

"We haven't turned a partner town away in over two years, even during shutdown," he said.

Selectman Martin H. Deely asked Clark if the town could cut its costs by making landfill space available so that Vicon could dispose of its ash residue in exchange for a reduced price.

which burns solid waste and sells the steam it generates to Crane & Co. of Dalton, has memorandums of understanding with seven Berkshire County communities to receive and burn their waste. The company has a formal contract with Pittsfield, and Clark said that he would be willing to negotiate such a contract with Lee, although he recommended that the town begin with a memorandum of understanding.

Under the terms of such a memorandum, the town would license haulers to collect waste and bring it to Vicon exclusively. Clark said that different towns have different methods of paying for waste collection and disposal. For example, some towns pay only the cost of incineration and the haulers make private arrangements with their customers for trash pickup and transportation. Other towns pay the entire cost.

Generally, said Clark, enough licenses are made available so that every commercial hauler in a town can get one. Licensing is in place to prevent individuals from bringing trash-laden private vehicles to Vicon, he said.

That activity is allowed in Pittsfield because when the contract was negotiated, no agreement could be reached on how many haulers should be licensed. The result of the impasse was that any Pittsfield resident could dispose of waste there by purchasing a sticker from the city, an arrangement that Clark said he does not want to enter into again.

Last in line

If Lee were to become the eighth community to sign a memorandum of agreement, its haulers would be last on a list that determines the order in which

Clark said that the idea was not out of the question, but that he would have to "think long and hard" before making such an arrangement.

No specific prices were discussed last night. However, the spot-market tipping fee at Vicon and at most commercial landfills is \$70 per ton, normally the highest rate. Contracts and memorandums of understanding usually result in lower prices, however. For example, Pittsfield pays \$60 per ton, Clark said.

The manager also said that it is unlikely Vicon's tipping fees will increase substantially because, while the amount of waste it takes in has decreased, foundations have been poured for new equipment that would allow the company to generate its own electricity. That would result in a saving of about \$500,000 per year, said Clark.

Also, he said, the price of the oil that Vicon uses to fire its incinerators has plummeted, and the company recently installed state-of-the-art air pollution control devices that are so close to 100 percent efficient that no federal regulation can reasonably be expected to raise the firm's costs by requiring more efficient air-scrubbing equipment.

Record 7-12-91
REV. EDWARD J. KROYAK

LEE—The Rev. Edward J. Kroyak, 68, pastor of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church, Westfield, and former curate at St. Mary's Church in Lee, died on July 2 in Worcester.

He was director of Cathedral High School in Springfield from 1967 to 1970.

During his time in Lee, from 1951 to 1955, Father Kroyak was active in youth work, founded the Lee Little League, and was instrumental in the creation of the Little League Field still in use here.

At a 1955 farewell event attended by 1,000 people in St. Mary's Hall, he was praised for also organizing a Catholic Youth Organization, beginning a community basketball league, reviving a Boy Scout troop, and rehabilitating the parish hall as a community center.

A native of Worcester, Father Kroyak was a communicant of Immaculate Conception Church there, studied classics at the College of the Holy Cross, and studied philosophy and theology in Montreal. He was ordained on December 18, 1948, in St. Michael's Cathedral in Springfield.

He served as a curate at Holy Cross Church in Springfield from 1949 until 1951, when he went to Lee. He was curate at Annunciation Church in Florence from 1955 until 1957.

Following graduate study at Catholic University in Washington, D. C., where he received a master's degree in guidance and counseling, he joined the faculty of Cathedral High School in Springfield in 1959. He was later appointed assistant director of the school and from 1967 to 1970 was director.

He was pastor of St. Matthew's Church in the Indian Orchard section of Springfield from 1970 until 1977, when he was appointed pastor of Blessed Sacrament Church in Westfield.

Earlier this year he had been appointed to the Bishops Select Committee, and before that had served in 1986 as spiritual director for the Holy Name Society of the Springfield Diocese. From 1978 until 1984 he was dean of the Hampden West Deanery.

He leaves a brother, John Kroyak of Leicester, and four sisters, Miss Helen Kroyak, Miss Josephine Kroyak, Mrs. Frances Holland, and Mrs. Mary O'Neil, all of Worcester.

A Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 6 at Blessed Sacrament Church. Burial was in St. John's Cemetery in Worcester. Robert E. Cusack Funeral Home, Westfield, is in charge of arrangements.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Development Fund of the Blessed Sacrament Church, Union Street, Westfield, 01086, or to the Cathedral High School Scholarship Fund, Surrey Road, Springfield, 01118.

Bartini becomes loan officer

Eagle
7/19/91

PITTSFIELD — Kevin A. Bartini has been promoted to consumer loan officer at Berkshire County Savings Bank, President Robert A. Wells has announced.

Bartini joined the bank in 1987 as a collector and in 1988 became collector and consumer loan underwriter.

Before joining BCSB, he was a teller at Lee Savings Bank. His earlier employment was with John Hancock Insurance as a sales agent and with Lee Lime Corp.

He holds an associate degree in business administration from Berkshire Community College and has taken American Institute of Banking courses.

Bartini lives in Lee with his wife, Charlene, and three children. He is active as a director and coach in the Little League.

Dupras Win Award Program Aids Disabled Lee Youth

By Christine Burns

LEE -- Twenty-one-year-old Patrick Noonan is a model employee.

He shows up on time. He does his work. And he does it right.

"Now that's job security for you," said Patrick's boss Dick Dupras, who with his wife, Rita, owns Dupras Liquor Mart at 9 Canal Street in Lee where for the past year and a half Patrick has been responsible for sorting and packing all the cans and bottles that are returned there.

When Patrick was six years old he was hit by a car and sustained a head injury. Since that time, while progressing in the Lee School System, he was enrolled in a program at East Mountain Head Injury Center in Westfield which specifically helped him cope with situations that arise in his life due to his disability. As an outgrowth of that program, Patrick became involved in Incentive Community Enterprise's extended employment program.

"What we do is search out types and places of employment that suit our clients," said Ken Gagne ICE project manager.

"But the other side of the coin is that there is a whole group of viable employees out there that could really benefit employers in the community."

Incentive Community Enterprise (ICE) was established in 1975 at which time it was primarily a modified social and vocational day rehabilitation to former state hospital patients. In 1976, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission authorized the agency to provide vocation evaluation, personal adjustment training and extended employment programs, giving ICE the springboard to develop the programs it provides today.

Funding, both state and federal money, for this program is provided by grants from the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Office of Employment Services and the Statewide Head Injury Program.

Currently ICE has eight people enrolled in its extended employment program. Although Patrick is the only Berkshire County resident working under the guidance of ICE, five other disabled persons are presently working in Franklin County and throughout the Pioneer Valley. The two remaining clients just began the program and haven't yet been placed in jobs.

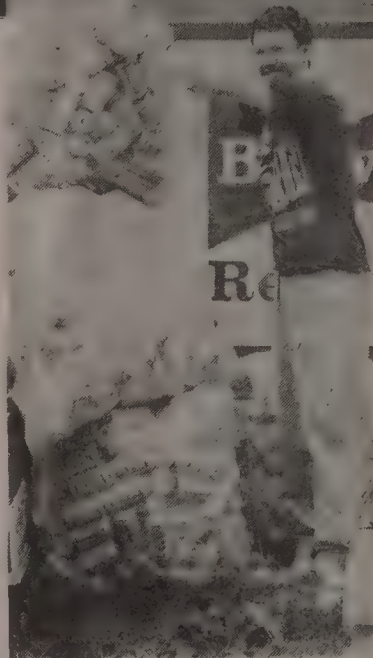
According to Gagne, ICE project manager, the largest obstacle in placement of handicapped persons in the workplace is "overcoming the stereotypes that they will not be able to do the work properly."

"There's this stigma that says that handicapped are not reliable, that they'll goof off on the job or there will be a high rate of absenteeism because of their disabilities," said Gagne.

"Actually in most of the cases we've dealt with through our program, the opposite is true. The disabled employees want to work,



Photos by Christine Burns
Patrick Noonan (center) presents a plaque to Rita (second from right) and Dick Dupras (far right) of Dupras Liquor Mart in Lee. Senior Employment Coordinator Dave Jackson (far left) and Ralph Juliano (second from left) look on. Below, Patrick Noonan working at the liquor store.



they show up on time and they're very conscientious about what they do when they get there."

Besides Dupras Liquor Mart, ICE has placed their clients in various positions at Massachusetts Mutual Insurance Company, Pratt & Austin Company, The Berkshire Mailroom and North Adams State College.

Senior Employment Coordinator Dave Jackson, who provides the on-the-job training and direct supervision, contends that there is no "extra work" involved on the employer's part when a disabled person is hired via this program.

"Actually what you're getting is two workers for the price of one because a supervisor remains on site with the disabled employee until that person is well-trained and knows what they are doing," said Jackson.

However, Jackson said that an ICE client has a much easier time adjusting to a new job if the employer and other workers take on a "supportive role."

Jack said that the Dupras and Ralph Juliano, another employee, have provided a tremendous amount of this "natural

support" for Patrick.

In fact, ICE has given the Dupras a commendation for their efforts. Last week Gagne and Jackson presented Patrick's employers with a plaque "in appreciation of their contribution to provide a supportive working environment for the disabled."

"A lot of employers could learn from the fine example that the Dupras have set," said Gagne and confirmed by Jackson.

But the Dupras were a little reluctant to take all the credit.

"It wasn't that difficult to accept a kid like Pat working for you," said Dick.

"He's quite an asset."

Berkshire Hills K of C Selects Therrien Knight

LEE—The Berkshire Hills Council of the Knights of Columbus recently elected the following members as officers for the 1992 fiscal year, beginning July 1: Robert A. Therrien, grand knight; Ken MacDowell, deputy grand knight; William S. Enser, chancellor; Peter Biasin, treasurer; Joseph A. Rock, recorder; Frank Juliano, warden; Jerome Scully, advocate; Gary Ziemba, inside guard; and James M. Candee Sr., outside guard.

Reverend Howard W. McCormick, pastor of St. Mary's Parish, was reappointed chaplain. Arthur Snide, Alfred J. Young, and John R. Cahalen Sr. all past grand knights, were elected trustees for three-, two-, and one-year terms.

Therrien requests that any individual or organization requiring K of C assistance in a project contact him.

Record 7-19-91

Berkshire Scenic Railroad Still Dead in Its Tracks

By Christine Burns

LEE — The casual tourist passing by the group of federal, state and local officials gathered in front of Sullivan Station Restaurant to discuss the future of the Berkshire Scenic Railway, leaned out the window of his Chrysler New Yorker and asked the question of the day.

"Excuse me, can you tell me if the train is going to run?" the gentleman asked from behind his sunglasses.

The answer was a definite "Not this year." after current owners of the track, officials of the scenic group, members of the Federal Railway Administration, State Representative Christopher J. Hodgkins (D-Lee) and a representative from Senator Jane Swift's office heatedly discussed the roadblocks to the train running on the stretch from Lee to Lenox.

The issues at the heart of the controversy are public safety, liability and confusion about the official status of the volunteer, non-profit, scenic organization.

The Scenic Railway began operating in 1984 with a totally volunteer staff headed by its president John Hebert. Former track owners, Guilford Transportation Industries stopped the train from running in 1990. Guilford also cited the deteriorated condition of the track and company fear of liability in case of passenger injury.

Berkshire Scenic Railway officials have contended that they have carried adequate liability insurance at all times.

When the tracks were purchased in January by John Hanlon and the Housatonic Railroad, with the aid of \$1.3 million worth of federal and state grants, public hopes for Berkshire Scenic Railway getting back on line were renewed because Hanlon has operated a scenic train in Connecticut.

Hodgkins, a longtime proponent of rail transportation, is pushing for the scenic railway because "those people were the impetus of getting the money for Housatonic with the understanding that they, too, would be allowed to benefit from the use of the tracks."

However, both parties agree that the stretch of tracks that the scenic railway would operate on, are not in an appropriate operating condition.

Currently, Housatonic is working on the stretch of tracks between the Connecticut border and the center of Sheffield and Hanlon said that "it will be a while" before his men would be available to fix the track in Lee and Lenox primarily because obtaining the specialized material needed for the project is a lengthy process due to a back ordering problem.

Hebert said that Berkshire Scenic would offer to hire a contractor to repair the 15-mile

stretch, but Hanlon said that his company could not have such "crucial work" completed by a third party. He added that the material problem would not be solved by an outside contractor.

The federal railroad officials were in Lee to settle the dispute over how well the scenic group would have to comply with federal regulations. Hebert contended that he could be exempted from some regulations because it was not a part of the "general railway system". He

documented his position by a May 3 letter from the former chief of safety at FRA, Joseph W. Walsh.

However, Mark McKeon, regional FRA director from Boston, said on Thursday that Berkshire Scenic is part of that system and therefore must comply with all federal regulations.

Despite the longstanding problems hanging over the fate of the scenic train, both Hebert and Hanlon agreed to keep the lines of communication open.

town topic

New Lee DPW board

Paul LaDuke was named to the Lee Department of Public Works last week by the selectmen, giving the DPW a full board. LaDuke's appointment marks the third new member appointed in the last few weeks to the controversial board. Three DPW members, including former Chairman Joseph Castronova who has been outspoken in his opinions, decided not to seek reappointment. LaDuke is a former longtime Planning Board chairman. The other new members are Joseph Marino and Robert Bartini.

Lee ZBA grants variance to Garrity

The Lee Zoning Board of Appeals granted a variance to Thomas and Barbara Garrity earlier this month for a six-apartment building on west Park Street. The variance was given after the Lee Selectmen approved and then rescinded their approval for the project. The recision was made because the board learned that it had exceeded its authority.

Nevertheless, Selectmen Chairman Diane Roosa and Selectman Martin Deely spoke in favor of Garrity's project at the July 10 hearing. Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo also spoke in favor of the project, saying the town needs the apartments, which would be rented for between \$450 and \$500 for two-bedroom units, and the tax revenue it would generate.

The ZBA was unanimous in its approval.



Photos by Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Moving day

Robert Donnelly, left, and Dan Mullett of Mullen Brothers Inc. carry a desk into the newly renovated Memorial Town Hall in Lee in photo above. At right, Lee maintenance worker Jerry Brasee puts a desk back together in the new DPW office. The Pittsfield moving company transported the last of the town office's furniture and files to the building Wednesday.



Hodgkins sets new goals to move forward as rep.

Three months after placing a strong third in his bid for Congress, state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, says he has adopted a new lease on his political life.

Having moved back into his original office in the Lee Airoldi Building, Hodgkins says he has reassessed his priorities and set his sights on different goals.

"It's a wonderful thing to lose ambition," Hodgkins said in an interview last weekend. "Now it's become a matter of being a good rep. Hopefully I will continue to be re-elected and can climb the ladder in the Legislature in Boston."

Hodgkins placed third in the hotly contested Democratic primary for Congress this spring. Hoping to fulfill a longtime dream, Hodgkins borrowed \$75,000 for his campaign, which was marked by a distinctive spunkiness that drew rave reviews, some criticism and a surprisingly high number of votes in the Connecticut valley.

After the primary, Hodgkins took one week off and then returned to work. He has quickly gotten back into the swing of local and state issues, making headlines on a variety of topics.

"I don't want people thinking I'm still running for Congress. We did very well, but I've put that behind me. Right now, the people here happen to believe I'm good at what I do. I want to improve on that," he says.

Faced with budget cuts in his own office, Hodgkins says he will have to lay off some staff. He has also moved his office back to the Airoldi Building, the site of his first office as a state representative.

Nevertheless, Hodgkins says he is in a good position to both benefit his district in the southern Berkshires and to move higher through the ranks in Boston. As chairman of the state Local Affairs Committee, Hodgkins says his colleagues must

get his board's approval for home-rule petitions and legislation pertaining to local issues.

"Every legislator goes through my board for some sort of legislation," he says. "I used to let my aides take care of a lot of those issues. Now, they all have to talk to me. There's a lot of ability there to help my district."

On the state level, Hodgkins says he is concerned by the changing priorities of Massachusetts government away from people. As a Democratic legislator under a Republican governor in a fiscally tight climate, Hodgkins says it has become harder to get things accomplished and to receive credit for those accomplishments.

Hodgkins adds that he is distressed by the dissolution of the Berkshire delegation, the group of Berkshire legislators who worked as a team on state issues.

"Eight years ago when I came in, there was a group of energetic legislators from this county -- Sherwood Guernsey, Frank Jakubowicz, all of them," Hodgkins says. "We were known statewide as the Berkshire delegation with an activist agenda."

We were known as a group of solid individuals. People used to talk about us. When I look around I don't see it anymore. We've lost that unity."

The issues that Hodgkins says he is pursuing now include insurance reform and a possible class-action lawsuit against the state, a package-reduction bill aimed at reducing the amount of waste people produce, and safety issues at the Yankee nuclear-power plant in Rowe, 30 miles northeast of Lee.

"Why am I involved in Yankee?" Hodgkins says. "Number one, it's not environmentally sound and it's not safe. There is no environmental disaster in Berkshire County that can't be put under control in



State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, carries through on his annual task as auctioneer for the Lee Youth Associations' junior auction.

one day except that one. Number two, I own a house."

Hodgkins has been at the forefront in reducing the water rate increase in Housatonic, he has blasted the controversial plan to build a massive landfill in Hinsdale and he is involved in trying to get the Massachusetts Land Bank's help in developing an industrial park on state Route 102 in Lee.

Other issues include trying to start a Berkshire Film Bureau, readjusting telephone rates, organizing a seminar to assist locally elected town officials on a variety of issues and a variety of timber-cutting problems on October Mountain.

Blessed with a strong victory in the 1990 election over two challengers and an even stronger showing in his district in the Democratic primary, Hodgkins seems to

have a very secure seat. In the primary, Hodgkins had a clear majority of votes in every town in his district and in some places, such as Lee and Hinsdale, had a 10-to-1 margin of victory over the closest contender.

"That puts me in a position where I can tell people what I think. There are some people out there who bully people and it's great to tell them to take a hike," he says.

Nevertheless, Hodgkins says he will take nothing for granted. He plans to remain a strong presence in south county. "Ninety percent of life is showing up -- and I haven't forgotten that," Hodgkins says. "Plus, I've got a \$75,000 campaign debt. The better job I do, the easier it will be to pay that off. . . I still have the attitude that you have to have a healthy paranoia."



Going like hot cakes -- The Rotary club sponsored its annual pancake breakfast Saturday by the Lee firehouse. Assisting the club were members of the Special Olympics team in south county.

The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, July 25, 1991 — B5

Lee hopes for surplus to offset loss of aid

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The final figure for state aid destined for Lee this year, \$1,595,609, is \$27,812 less than town financial officers had been led to expect at the time of Lee's annual town meeting in May.

But Town Treasurer Patricia D. Carlino said yesterday there may be an offsetting surplus from the fiscal year that just ended June 30.

The town's accountant, Marylou Dadak, is in the process of closing the books for that fiscal year, and when she completes the job, any such surplus will become clear, Carlino said.

Surplus may not be the appropriate word. Carlino said revenue taken in by the town under the heading of local receipts frequently is greater than estimated at the start of a fiscal year. "I think it will be greater this year, too," she said.

It could offset some or all of the state-aid deficit now spelled out in the town's cherry sheet that she said arrived in the mail yesterday.

The town at the moment is operating on an \$8.56 million budget that is out of balance by about \$240,000. Selectmen and the Fi-

nance Committee in June obtained informal commitments from various town departments to pare their budgets in an effort to cut the \$240,000 and bring the budget into balance.

But formal action has been held in abeyance pending receipt of the cherry sheet, the document each town and city receives with state-aid figures. It gets its name from its color.

Local receipts, Carlino explained, come from such sources as building and wiring permits, water and sewer fees, motor vehicle excise taxes, tuitions, room taxes and various licenses and permits for which charges are levied.

Local receipts do not include property taxes.

The practice in commonwealth towns, Carlino said, is to estimate at the start of each fiscal year the local receipts for the next 12 months. The estimate is usually the amount received in the prior year, which in Lee's case was \$1.67 million. History indicates that receipts more commonly rise than fall, which underlies Carlino's cautious optimism.

"We'll get the figures all together by Monday, I hope, and present them to the Selectmen," she said.

The Berkshire Record,

7-26-91

Lee Library Hosts Show By 4 Artists

LEE—A group show featuring both figurative and abstract paintings by four Berkshire artists is on view at the gallery in the Lee Library on Main Street through July 31.

Nancy Barnes, a part-time resident of Lenox and Rosemont, Pennsylvania, is showing her figure paintings in mixed media. She is scheduled for an exhibition at the Berkshire Artisans in Pittsfield in January, 1994.

Lenox resident Pat Gable, who is currently having a one-person show at the Seven Hills Inn in Lenox, is showing her abstract oil paintings.

Leslie Meltzer of Housatonic, cartoonist for the locally published "In the Arts/Fractals" magazine, is showing abstract acrylic mixed media paintings.

Evelyn Rothstein, a part-time resident of West Stockbridge and New York City, is showing acrylic still life and figure paintings. Her work is currently on display at Canyon Ranch in Lenox and the Gallery at Mill River, and is included in the Naumkeag Museum show in Stockbridge on July 27 and 28.

The gallery is open during regular library hours, which are Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 10:00-8:00; Wednesday and Friday, 10:00-5:00; and Saturday, 10:00-2:00.

Pierre Lapin Shop in Lee Exudes Whimsy



Joseph Toole sits amidst the whimsically handcrafted merchandise featured in his Lee gallery shop Pierre Lapin in the Chambery Inn.

By Christine Burns

LEE — Tucked away in the ground floor of the Chambery Inn on the corner of Elm and Main Streets in Lee, is a shop that exudes the same whimsical, lighthearted nature of the fairy tale character after which it was coincidentally named.

Proprietor Joseph Toole has stocked the artistically placed shelves and display cases of his shop, Pierre Lapin, loosely translated as Peter Rabbit, with items that "are all handcrafted, colorful and loaded with style."

Everything from the "highly functional" to the "purely conversational" which range in price at an appropriate ratio can be found at this gallery shop. On the floor lie pastel, brightly colored, hand painted mats depicting scenes of dancing rabbits and talking cats.

In the center of the gal-

lery is a glass-topped table complemented by two high back bird chairs. As you slide into the unusual accommodations, the bird curves to the shape of your back.

"Surprisingly comfortable for being hardwood chairs, aren't they," Toole asked rhetorically.

Toole's stock is surprising.

"Look at these for example," he starts as he makes his way to two, five-foot tall wooden tropical birds.

"It's all a matter of focus. They have the bright, more modern, colors and the sort of bold shapes, but when you really look at the quality of the work, it's exquisite. For a lack of a better word, it looks like an antique finish."

The shop's biggest seller, a varied selection of colorful fused glass plates and glasses line one wall of the store.

That delicate but useful collection is flanked by thick, functional pottery that sport playful scenes and bold shapes on plates

of all sizes.

Another one of Toole's most popular items, is his decorative jewelry.

He carries an extensive line of sterling silver as well as "this year's craze", glass jewelry.

Toole features two local artists at his gallery, both of whose functional pottery are bounded by the whimsical theme but also take on a "bit of a country feeling, but the majority of the top contemporary merchandise hails from other parts of the country."

All of the merchandise featured at Pierre Lapin is handcrafted and although Toole admitted that that condition puts him under the constraints of that market, he explained that half of his stock is readily available and he has adequate supplies for the items not readily available.

Pierre Lapin is open for business daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Photo by Christine Burns

Lee Officials Consider Solutions For Town's Waste Disposal Woes

By Emily DeVoti

LEE— Trash just isn't as simple as it used to be.

With the new state recycling mandates, updated landfill restrictions, the imminent closure of the local dump, and a tighter than tight budget, Lee officials are stewing over a solution to waste disposal.

Vicon Resource Recovery Associates is the newest contender to get the cash for the trash. Llewellyn E. Clark, who manages the Pittsfield-based plant and represented them at last week's special meeting of the Selectmen and DPW, says that Vicon is the simplest answer.

Clark foresees an integrated plan for Berkshire County, and he would like Lee to be a part of it, adding to the list of seven other North and South Berkshire County towns which are now serviced by Vicon.

Five years ago, Vicon was rejected by the town of Lee, perhaps because they could not guarantee the consistent service which Clark believes is now possible. But today, he thinks it's a different story.

"With the new state mandate program, I think there is room," he said. Clark said that with the new state-wide recycling mandates, dubbed Reduce Reuse Recycle [RRR], waste will be significantly reduced among the participatory towns. In fact, each town must prove itself at least 25% recycling efficient in order for Vicon to service it.

Clark estimated a waste reduction in Vicon's combined service areas from 125,400 tons to 98,500, leaving plenty of room for Lee's estimated 4,000 tons.

Clark said that Vicon also has another outlet for the expansion of the plant and the consequent simplification of the Berkshire County waste disposal problem: another incinerator.

"It's very conceivable that one burner could eliminate need for landfill in the rest of the county," he said.

Clark's offer is for Lee to join Pittsfield, Lenox, Tyringham, Lanesboro, Richmond, Dalton, Hinsdale, and Washington in Vicon's service list, which is serviced in the order in which they joined.

Being the last to join, Lee would be the last to be served, but Clark said that service has not been a problem for the last two years.

Lee hauler Nelson Daley advocated the program as the most economically viable, assuring it would also be the most convenient arrangement for haulers.

The advantage of the program is that there would be no primary investment; it would merely be a service, with payments implemented primarily between the resident and the hauler.

The break-down of the payment would rest between the



Photo by Christine Burns
Workers at the Massachusetts Recycling Facility in Springfield sort through 140 tons of recycled paper every week.

town and the residents, Clark said, noting that each town has implemented a plan which works for them.

However, residents would have to work through an authorized hauler, a stipulation which Vicon implemented geared at eliminating traffic congestion. The haulers would be the go-betweens, charging their own pick-up rates, including Vicon's incineration fee.

With an estimated weekly average of 40lbs of garbage per household, Clark quoted a cost of \$1.40 per load to cover the actual disposal cost.

According to officials, the last

time Vicon presented their proposition to Lee, the town was looking at approximately \$600,000 to expand Lee's town dump. Now, Scolforo said that the dump will only last a couple more years, and the figures for a new landfill are looking past the million dollar mark.

Just last year, a town meeting authorized the allotment of over \$1 million for the purchase of an additional 27-acre plot adjoining Lee's landfill. In addition, new state regulations, effective in 1992, require landfill's to be lined and equipped with land protection devices, all of which costs money.

Lee VNA Eagle honors 31 7-29-91

LEE — Thirty-one homemaker home-health aides were honored at the second annual Recognition Day, sponsored by the Lee Visiting Nurse Association on July 25.

Special awards were given to Shirley Richmond, who received a five-year pin; to Linda Whalen, who fills a newly established post of assistant coordinator, and to Arlene Campoli, homemaker home-health aide coordinator, who managed scheduling of aides during a period of doubled growth during the past year.

Rachael Porter and Geneva Daniels were each cited for receipt of the Homemaker Home-Health Aide of the Month awards during recent months.

Ann Beacco, newly retired executive director of the Lee VNA, presented the awards. The program was under the direction of Jane Kelley, program supervisor.

Homemakers and home-health aides provide personal care and light housekeeping for home-bound clients in Central and South Berkshire as well as parts of Hampden and Hampshire counties. They work under the direct supervision of professional nurses for the non-profit agency.

Similes pop up like mushrooms



Mike and Elyse Sommer show off the new book of similes on the porch of their home in Lee.

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Figures of speech are irresistible to Lee editor

By Pat Nichols
Special to The Eagle

Elyse Sommer of Lee and Forest Hills, N.Y., to use an old simile, is as happy as a clam. Or maybe as happy as two clams who escaped the clam rake. Her new book, "As One Mad With Wine, and Other Similes," is selling steadily, she summers in the Berkshires, and she has several other books in process.

Elyse, a literary agent with her own agency in New York, and her husband, Mike, collaborated on the collection of over 8,000 similes, those colorful, succinct figures of speech that make writing, as well as speaking, come alive with images of unlike comparisons.

Beth Dempsey, the public relations manager at Visible Ink Press, said that the response to the book has been terrific both from the press and from customers.

"Visible Ink is a subsidiary of Gale Research Company, which is a well-known reference company," she said. "This is the first time we've repackaged for the non-academic customer," she said. "We looked for the strongest area of consumer interest."

Similes are easy to spot, introduced usually by "as" or "like." They bring clarity and texture to communication, add sparkle to advertising and, according to Sommer, are the most accessible of all figures of speech.

Likes words

Elyse, an editor and writer as well as an agent, is a book lover with a long fascination for words, especially similes.

"I am a word person," she said. "I started to collect similes many years ago."

Each time she found one she liked, she added it to the growing list. As the list grew,

SIMILE, continued on H6

Similes pop up like mushrooms

■ SIMILE, from H1

she realized she had the makings of a book. Enter the computer.

"The final put-together wasn't bad," she said. "But, I could never have done it without a computer. The computer stores the information, then helps with cross-references and alphabetizing."

Mike added his own expertise as he read uncounted mysteries, a fertile field for similes. He also helped with illustrations and interviews.

The poet Algernon Swinburne's "babble as one mad with wine" inspired the title of the book, the first real attempt in 65 years to offer a compilation of similes, according to Sommer. The last try, based on slips an author collected in a shoe box, resulted in little more than a pamphlet.

Sommer placed her book in a broad category known as enabling books, books in which you find out something you didn't know. "I like organizing information," she said. "I hope people don't see the book as a swipe volume. Instead, use your own creativity. If you think you can't take a cliché, rework it."

Cliches are OK

She included clichés even though they often appear tired and worn because the worst cliché says reams more than the "you knows" that pepper modern-day conversation. A professional puzzler who heard about the book when Sommer was writing it advised her to include clichés because he uses them often when he schemes his puzzles.

Shakespeare's works are especially rich in similes, according to Sommer, as is the Bible. Witness Shakespeare's brief but eloquent "as fair as day" or the pithy "crushed like rotten apples." The Bible abounds with true-to-life similes: "Bold as a lion" and "hot as an oven" are two examples.

Other similes were part of the tradition of New England folklore, where they received decided respect.

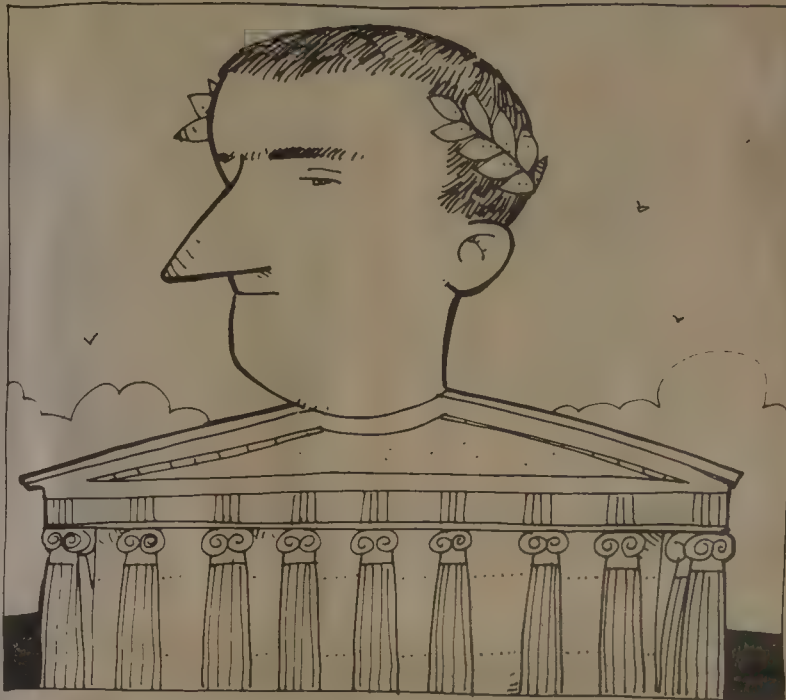
"People even kept similes in family books," she said. "Today we don't care as much about words."

Similes aren't difficult, she added. Even 2nd graders are good at them. Mystery writers have long been devotees of the form as they wind through tales of murder or mayhem. John D. MacDonald, for instance, describes for the reader "a bed that sagged like a hammock," leaving no doubt in anyone's mind about the condition of that resting place.

Sue Grafton's "carpeting as soft underfoot as moss" enables the reader to feel the texture right through the text.

Sommer said Edith Wharton was a wonderful user of similes. "She used them as seasoning, a few here and there. She didn't hit you over the head with them, they enriched the work," she said.

Herman Melville's "clanged like fifty fire engines" rings in the reader's ear. Raymond



SHOULDERS LIKE THE PARTHENON

Illustration from the Sommers' book.

Chandler's "a thin plaintive sound, like a starved cat," makes the fear real.

Snappy snippets

In the introduction to "As One Mad With Wine," Sommer refers to similes as "snappy snippets, the original soundbites." She arranged the book according to categories, but she didn't stop there. Her personal stamp colors the comments, modernizations and cross-references. The book is full of "sees" and "see also's" to send the reader dipping into other possible solutions.

Under "houses" she suggests checking furniture and furnishings, under "pain" she adds "see also health." If you need a jump start for a simile for dreams, Sommer suggests a look at "ambition" or "sleep" as well as those under the original category.

Notes added

You can browse through other writers' words to illuminate dreams. Are the dreams you hope to describe "dreams withered like flowers that are blighted by frost" as Ellen Glasgow's are? Or do the dreams "pop out like old fillings in the teeth" as Diane Wakooski's do?

When necessary, Sommer clarifies the quote or explains where it came from and how it changed over time. Sometimes it was impossible to track down the originator of an oft-used phrase and nothing would do but to attribute it to Anon.

The book is arranged according to categories and authors. If you want to click into a favorite author's style of simile, or see how often an author uses the figure of speech, scan the Author's Index. If you want a simile to jog your own creative process, take a look under the categories.

Sommer is a native of Germany who left that country for the United States the day after Kris-

tallnacht, "the night of broken glass" in 1938 when the Nazis began to destroy synagogues, windows of Jewish homes and the Jews' possessions.

Remembering that experience, she said, "It gives me a nice demarcation. If something is vague in my memory, I think about whether it happened there or here."

Sommer's family lived in North Carolina for a year after the move and she remembers it fondly. "People were very nice to us, we were made to feel very special."

While her family eventually settled in Long Island, both Elyse and Mike Sommer enjoy the Berkshires.

"We find that the parts come together here," she said. "We meet people we haven't seen in years. The first person I spoke to here was a person I went to high school with. My husband met a woman he went to grade school with."

Sommer has some thoughts about books in general. "People complain about books, about the cost. They don't stop to think that they can pass them around or reread them. We have a reading family. We pass books around."

Since "One Mad With Wine" is a good chairside book, you can return to it over and over. "However, this book is addictive," publicist Dempsey warned. "People tend to go right through it. Some of the examples are poetic, some are just nice reading. It is organized thematically. We planned it as an organizational tool for writers."

The book, priced at \$17.95, is a good read. And if your appetite is whetted for similes, if you want to brighten up your speech or writing capabilities, or if you want Sommer's tips on how to create similes, you'll find "As One Mad With Wine" in most Berkshire County bookstores.

Photos by Joel Librizzi

The Western Massachusetts Girl Scout Council offers girls ages 6 to 14 one-week daytime sessions in summer at its Camp Marion White in Richmond. Here's what one day looked like.



Work of art

Sara Bullock, 7, of Lee, fashions a basket in arts and crafts class.

A day at a summer camp for girls



Flag raising

Unit leader Rachel Carter raises the flag at the beginning the day.



Rowing lesson

Waterfront director Lisa Fiorini, gives pointers on the art of rowing to Meghan Brown, 9, of Lee.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee Building Inspector Robert J. Lester has ordered the removal of burned warehouse on Marble Street.

Neighbors of Marble Street property raise dust, noise complaints at meeting

By Gerald B. O'Connor

Berkshire Eagle Staff 7-30-91

LEE — Trouble was doubled last night for Housatonic businessman Frederick J. Mercer Jr. He came to Town Hall to talk about an order to tear down the remains of a burned warehouse he owns and then heard the Selectmen tell him that if he doesn't bring adjacent property up to standard in 30 days, his certificate of occupancy will be revoked.

The warehouse today is a skeleton of bent and twisted steel on Marble Street that the town's building inspector, Robert J. Lester, decided had been left standing long enough since the May 20 fire that destroyed it. He issued an order to Mercer on Wednesday giving him 15 days to remove it or else be subject to a possible court order to do so.

Mercer said last night he would take down the remains of the warehouse but gave the impression that he feels himself an innocent victim in the case of the adjacent property and the threatened withdrawal of the occupancy certificate that goes with it.

Both properties form one parcel that lies on the west side of

Marble Street. The north end of the parcel is the site of what had been the 17,000-square-foot warehouse that held bales of paper stored by Mead Corp.'s Specialty Paper Division. Most of the bales are still there, some stacked and some lying in disarray. Town officials said the company is preparing to remove them.

The south end, which abuts the entrance to the Lee Lime Corp. buildings, is leased by Mercer to Vallerie Transportation Service, a Fairfield, Conn., trucking company that maintains a terminal there.

Noise at night

Two couples, Stephen B. and Mary Seward and Henry J. and Rose Salice, who are Marble Street abutters of the property, told the Selectmen that Vallerie has continually violated a 3-year-old agreement with the town that it would not run its trailer-truck engines after 9 p.m. and before 6:30 a.m.

The trucks can be heard "at all hours, sometimes 2 a.m., sometimes 4," said Stephen Seward. "Those air starters are like a jet engine," he continued. "They start you right out of bed." Air

starters are used to start diesel engines.

"The tractors idling wake me up," said Henry Salice. "It's been going on pretty near three years."

"It's very discouraging," said his wife.

"It goes on every night except Saturday and Sunday," said Mary Seward.

While these complaints at first appeared to have nothing to do with Mercer, he found himself involved when the abutters contended that the dust kicked up by the trucks is a problem as well.

Selectman Joseph F. Dupont said part of the 3-year-old agreement was not just that Vallerie wouldn't run its trucks in the nighttime hours but that Mercer, as property owner, would take steps to screen the border where it adjoins the neighboring property and would blacktop the yard or make other arrangements to eliminate the dust.

He said the Selectmen have been "reluctant" in the past to take action, "but there has been no cooperation." As a result, Dupont said, he was prompted to submit the motion last night that finally passed unanimously.

It was that the building inspector notify Vallerie that the company is in violation of sections of the zoning bylaw dealing with noise and dust, and that it must take "immediate action to do whatever is necessary" to end the infractions.

The motion also requires that the owner, Mercer, be informed of the notice to Vallerie and be advised that unless the property is put into condition to meet the requirements of a permanent certificate of occupancy within 30 days, the present certificate, a temporary one, will be revoked.

Temporary or not, it's a valid permit, said Mercer, who maintained that he had oiled the Vallerie parking lot at a cost of \$4,500 to control the dust. Present dust comes from work being done down the street, not from the Vallerie yard, he contended.

Hard to please?

As for bringing the property into compliance with town regulations, "I'm never going to satisfy him," said Mercer, referring to Building Inspector Lester.

The temporary certificate for the Vallerie site was issued two years ago, said Lester, who was present last night as well.

All were in the Selectmen's office for the weekly Selectmen's meeting, the first one since 1982 held in Memorial Town Hall. The hall was renovated during the winter and spring and the move of nearly all the town offices back from the one-floor Airolodi Building on Railroad Street was made during the week of July 15.

The Selectmen agreed to schedule an open house at the hall some time in September.

Mead delays cogen plant

By Erik Bruun

Hit by the national and regional recession, Mead Specialty Paper Division has postponed construction of a \$50 million cogeneration plant for two to three years and is reconsidering the financial feasibility of the project.

"The current demand forecasts by New England Power Co. have been reduced to the point where they don't think they can use the power from a new cogeneration plant," Mead president David Klausmeyer says. "There will probably be a couple of years' delay."

Klausmeyer adds that demand for Mead's specialized paper is soft both for domestic and international sales. Ironically, Klausmeyer says the slowdown has a good side effect because the company can accelerate its plans for its three-phase, \$14 million capital-improvement plan.

"By strengthening ourselves during the recession, we know we will be in a better position when things turn around."

The three-phase campaign is intended to make the plant more efficient, increase capacity and improve the quality of the product, Klausmeyer says.

"We're pleased to say we're sticking to those original plans and that is going very well," Klausmeyer says. "By strengthening ourselves during the recession, we know we will be in a better position when things turn around."

With 350 employees and a strong commitment to the area, Mead is considered one of the most important manufacturers in south county. Mead makes laminated paper for homes, business interiors, furnishings and automobiles.

Klausmeyer says Mead has had no layoffs, although the company has shut down the plant to work on repairs, cleanups and capital improvements. With the exception of Germany, Klausmeyer says, sales in both European and domestic markets are down, affected by the drop in home and commercial construction.

"We're dealing with national and international markets here and there are some signs that things are bottoming out and starting to turn around," Klausmeyer says. "Housing starts are beginning to increase and there are some good signs in the automobile market, so we hope to see an increase in orders soon."

JUNIOR LEE TENNIS TOURNAMENT: The Lee Tennis Association is sponsoring the boys and girls singles and doubles tennis tournament Aug. 6-8 for children 16 and under. Registration with a \$3 fee must be submitted by Monday. Volunteer monitors and scorekeepers are needed. Tennis games will be at Lee Athletic Field, Ardenberg Court and Greenock Country Club.

THE BIG EVENT: St. Ann's Church in Lenox will hold its annual Big Event festival at its Main Street church Friday through

Mead to delay cogen plant

Continued from page 1

Klausmeyer, however, says he expects the news will not change the delay in construction of the cogeneration plant. Planning to build a plant fueled by natural gas, Mead hopes to lessen its fuel costs and to sell excess power to Mass. Electric Co., a subsidiary of New England Power.

But after meeting with New England Power officials three weeks ago, Klausmeyer says the slumping New England economy has led to a decrease in demand for energy and the power company has excess energy capacity. The slump was caused by decreasing energy demands from the computer industry, general manufacturing, housing and office use.

"The demand for power has gone down," Klausmeyer says. "Everybody is feeling the recession and (the power company) is just reacting to power forecasts."

On line in 1995?

Mead had originally hoped to complete construction of a cogeneration plant by the end of this year, but with the latest obstacle, Klausmeyer says the plant will not be on line until the end of 1995.

Klausmeyer says his company is still interested in building a cogeneration plant and the utility company will likely accept the energy several years from now. But, he adds, the project also involves O'Brien Energy Systems, which would build the plant for Mead.

"We will have to review whether a delayed project still has financial feasibility," Klausmeyer says. "That involves making estimates on the costs of inflation and the revenues associated with that. We have to see if a delayed project is still of interest to all three parties."

Until now, Mead has gone through the state's draft environmental-impact report process with relatively few minor issues to resolve. Before filing a final environmental report, Klausmeyer says the company will go to the Department of Public Utilities to plan for constructing the plant at a future date. He estimates that construction of the plant would begin in 1993 if all goes well.

Vallerie, Mercer told to shape up in Lee

Responding to neighbors' complaints, the Lee Selectmen ordered Vallerie Trucking Co. Monday to comply with requirements imposed two years ago on the Marble Street company. The selectmen also ordered the owner of the property, Frederick J. Mercer Jr., to improve the parcel or face the revocation of a temporary certificate of occupancy for the building.

Marble Street residents told the selectmen that trucks are entering and leaving the property outside of prescribed hours and use it at all hours. At times, they say, sleep is impossible. They add that Mercer has not carried through on a promise to mitigate dust at the property and to landscape the land. Mercer says he has taken appropriate measures, but adds that the neighbors and Building Inspector Robert Lester "are never satisfied."

Apparently dissatisfied with Mercer's response, the selectmen sided with the abutters and promised to force Vallerie and Mercer to be more neighborly.

In a related matter, Mercer received from Lester a demolition permit to remove the remains of his warehouse on Marble Street that was destroyed by fire three months ago. Lester had ordered Mercer to clean up the building Monday because it was deemed a safety hazard.

St. George's revives party

Bringing back a former tradition, St. George's Church on Franklin Street has revived its annual summer bazaar and lawn party. The event will be held Saturday from 10 to 2 - rain or shine.

Refreshments and a wide variety of tag-sale items, books, plants, jewelry and crafts will be for sale. A special feature of the day will be handmade lawn and garden ornaments by Gordon Sparks of Lee.

walkabout

By
Deidre Consolati



LEE'S RENOVATED TOWN HALL SPARKLES in the morning sun these days, like the rare architectural jewel that it is. The red-brick exterior has been scrubbed clean and a new slate roof replaces the old. The handsome mansard-roofed building, eclectic in style, is formally called Memorial Hall. It was built in 1873 and dedicated to local soldiers who fought or died in the Civil War. It is a square, three-story edifice with double hexagonal towers and a foundation of Lee marble that sets off the three marble-columned porticos that are the building's hallmark and a large part of its charm. Strangely enough, the towers differ in height, another interesting feature. Granite risers - down which Lee kids have happily slid for generations - flank each doorway. The marble columns support a roof decorated with *fleur de lis*, under which descend three brick archways, each lower than the last and creating an illusion of great depth.

To ensure accessibility for the handicapped, the main entrance was lowered to ground level. Although dismantled in the process were the twin winding staircases - also made from Lee marble - that served as the focus of the building's interior beauty, the new design does not substantially alter the appearance of the exterior, to the great credit of the committee overseeing the project. Regrettably, this was not the case when a wing was added to the Lee Library in the 1970s, where a long, boxlike structure - typical of modern architectural planning - was joined to a dazzling three-story-high marble-columned and cupola-topped Victorian-style edifice of great beauty.

How appropriate for the townspeople of Lee to invest so wisely in their town hall, a historic treasure and solid symbol of their government. And indeed, investing they are, for time is fleeting and today's children will soon be tomorrow's citizens, nurtured and inspired by our caretaking of this splendid building that - together with the marble library and soaring spire of the Congregational Church - is the pride of Lee.

When viewed in this light, the million-dollar price tag that accompanied the renovation is somewhat easier to contemplate. It transforms itself into a positive statement sorely needed in this contemporary jumble, an encouragement to tomorrow's townspeople to make their own personal contribution to the community of Lee.

Congratulations are in order for all who worked diligently to turn this particularly meaningful dream into reality, from cogent and persuasive arguments on the town-meeting floor by lawyer Henry Donahoe and representative Pat Carlino and others, through the tedious planning and building stages, until the final nail was in place. Should Selectman Diane Roosa, who sat on the committee, not wish to seek re-election after two terms in office (and many would encourage her to run), she should well-consider the restoration of Memorial Hall the high point of her career and her finest offering to the people of Lee.

"It came out nice," Chief Edward Finnegan laconically commented, referring to his new police headquarters in the building. Although not a stickler for grammar, his approval nonetheless ran high for the new space, now housed on the first floor instead of the basement. His is the first office one sees when entering through a new set of doors leading into the first-floor corridor. Directly across the hall is the treasurer's and accountant's office (occupying its usual spot). At the end of the hall - past the original, splendid marble tablets commemorating the soldiers, is the courtroom, now empty.

When the Southern Berkshire District Court was moved from Lee to Great Barrington a few years ago, the room suddenly became vacant. This coincided with the renovation of the building and came in handy as a temporary entrance and reception area. According to sources, plans are under way to repaint the room, replace the oak benches (moved during the project) and keep the courtroom format intact for historical purposes - a fine idea. The room will then be used as a general meeting area for public use.

Preserved for posterity will be the raised judge's bench, the witness stand and railings separating officials and those involved in the judicial process from onlookers seated on the oak benches. The room's *piece de resistance* rests behind the judge's desk: a stunning Victorian oak floor-to-ceiling bookcase, embellished with fine carvings, taking up the entire length and breadth of the wall. Behind its six glass doors lay lawbooks, large and small, from an earlier era. So authoritative is the piece and its weighty tomes that, upon entering the room, the viewer's confidence in local jurisprudence is immediately and indelibly shored up (if ever it wavered).

Lee High School Warned Funding May Drop 21%

By Emily DeVoti

Record 8-2-91

OTIS— Regionalization is top on the mind of The Otis-Sandisfield Regional School District Planning Board, which officially notified the Lee Board of Selectmen of their existence this week.

The Planning Board is a combination of representatives from the Regional District Planning Commissions which the residents of both Otis and Sandisfield voted in at their respective annual town meetings. The current board was established in June.

Chairman of the board, Denise Gould, said that the board is now in the process of establishing a set of concrete future plans for a new regional school system for the 1992-93 academic year which they will present to the state early this month.

They will follow the new regulations for regionalization put into effect July 1 of this year.

If this plan is a success, the Lee School District will lose the 21% of total funding to their central office which Otis now provides.

"It would come off of my salary and a certain percentage from my administrative assistant and book keeper," confirmed Lee Superintendent of Schools Henry T.

Otis-Sandisfield Regional District May Withdraw Students in 1992

Zukowski. "I do not know where the funds would come from to cover it."

He also said, however, that plans for the new region are in preliminary stages and have a long road ahead of them.

"Remember, the importance of a region is to come up with a better educational program than they have now," he said.

"Otis has a good program. Sandisfield is in serious trouble."

Gould agrees with Zukowski in the intent of a region, and she said that the board feels that better education is their primary concern.

Although the region will technically include grades preK-12, she said that both school systems would continue to tuition their grade 7-12 students out to other high schools. This regionalization will therefore focus primarily upon the elementary school education.

"It is an attempt to keep elementary

schools town based," said Gould.

Right now, both schools are experiencing a tight space crunch. The Otis elementary school currently enrolls approximately 140 students, with Sandisfield claiming half that number.

Gould said that combining forces would allow the systems to enhance their programs and perhaps pool their resources for a consolidated space.

The board anticipates a busy time ahead in organizing the complex plan for regionalization over the next three and one half months.

On August 8, they will meet with Christine Lynch, Educational Representative at the School Facilities Service in Boston.

Later in the month, the board will meet with Lynch in an official Reorganization Needs Conference, after which the Department of Education will provide a letter of understanding either requesting

more information or instructing the board to carry on and draft a district agreement.

If the latter path is taken, the board will be one step further towards breaking from their respective school district unions and forming a regional district of their own.

After state approval, the plan localizes; the towns of Otis and Tyringham must vote to accept this district, and then the respective unions must vote to dissolve, granting the small schools their independence.

Otis is currently involved in the union of District 29, which includes Lee and Tyringham. Sandisfield is in a union with Granville.

Gould admits that the success of the regionalization is not guaranteed and the process is not simple, but she is very positive.

She said that the state of Massachusetts tends to support the formation of regions because they feel that the larger numbers and higher diversity which regions imply provide better education for rural children.

The final plans must be submitted to the state by November 15 for regionalization effective for the 1992-93 academic year.

Permit Under Scrutiny

Record 8-2-91

Vallerie Trucking Noise Cited in Lee

LEE— The Board of Selectmen unanimously voted to notify Vallerie Trucking that they are in violation of section 11.1 of the zoning by-laws in relation to noise and dust. The board said that unless the requirements for a permanent seal are met within 30 days, that the company's temporary seal will be revoked.

This decision came immediately after the public complaint of a group of affected residents, and years after the problem started.

In 1988, Vallerie agreed to specific hours of cooperation in conjunction with noise control and the management of dust through oiling of the property. Landscaping was also promised.

Monday night, the residents complained that these agreements had not been met.

"It's worse than it's ever been now, and something's got to be done about it," said Steve

Seward.

His wife, Mary, confirmed that the operation is active every night of the week except for Saturday and Sunday, "and they start out with that air horn," she said.

"I'm up at night reading because I can't sleep," said Rose Salice.

Selectman Martin Deely

confirmed that the noise and dust have been a problem for years.

In terms of landscaping, only three trees have been planted.

Fredrick Mercer, who owns the land upon which the trucking company operates, holds joint responsibility for the violations.

He said that he has oiled and landscaped the property.

Homemaker Aides Honored in Lee

LEE — Thirty-one Homemaker Home-Health Aides were honored at the second annual recognition day, sponsored by the Lee Visiting Nurses Association Inc. on July 25, 1991 in Lee.

Special awards were given to Shirley Richmond, who received a five-year plan pin, to Linda Whalen, who fills a newly established post of Assistant Coordinator, and Arlene Campoli, Coordinator who managed scheduling of Homemaker Home-Health Aides during a period of doubled growth during the past year.

Rachel Porter and Geneva Daniels both received Homemaker Home-Health Aide of the Month Awards for their service during the recent months.

Homemakers and Home-Health Aides provide light housekeeping and personal care for homebound clients in central and southern Berkshire County as well as in parts of Hampden and Hampshire Counties. They work under the direct supervision of professional nurses for the non-profit agency.

Ann Beacco, recently retired executive director of the Lee VNA, presented the awards. The program was under the direction of Jane Kelley, Program Supervisor.

Dairy farmers rally in Lee for vendor's fee

By Gerald B. O'Connor

Berkshire Eagle Staff

8-3-91

LEE — A cow on a billboard was the backdrop yesterday for a new appeal by Massachusetts dairy farmers for understanding of their economic plight and support for another legislative effort to enact an 8-cent-a-gallon "vendor's fee."

At risk, they said, are the majority of the state's 400 remaining dairy farms, the 160,000 acres of land they embrace and the benefits they bring to the state's economy, quality of life and conservation of open space.

Several of them blasted Gov. William F. Weld for dodging the fee while trying to appear to be a champion of the farming community.

Farm families from Berkshire and other Western Massachusetts counties, together with several Berkshire legislators, farm advocates and a few people who were simply curious heard the appeal in the parking lot of RW's Towing & Repairs on Housatonic Street just north of the Massachusetts Turnpike overpass.

The billboard loomed on the opposite side of the street, which is also U.S. Route 20.

It is the first cow billboard in Massachusetts, said Mary Hale of Tyringham, one of the organizers and a member of the Berkshire Farm Bureau Association. The association and the Berkshire Natural Resources Council, a Pittsfield-based environmental and land-preservation organization, were the sponsors.

Speakers, who urged listeners to lobby their legislators on behalf of the fee, were critical of Weld, both for his opposition to the fee and his attempt to take credit for a different kind of increase in the wholesale milk price that began to

show up in farm paychecks this week.

"He knows better," said Hancock dairyman Donald Leab. "He's added 6 cents a gallon where we really need 22 to 25 cents."

"It's a whitewash job."

In fact, said Leab and several others, the 6-cent increase is part of what is called an over-order price that was triggered by New York and Vermont and copied by all other New England states. It was instituted in Massachusetts by state Food and Agriculture Commissioner Gregory Watson last May. Weld is trying to gain credit for it when it was pretty much dictated by events, they said.

The main differences between it and the vendor's fee, said Great Barrington dairyman Arthur J. Coons, are that the vendor's fee would go entirely to Bay State dairymen whereas the over-order

Lee residents urged to save water

LEE — The head of the town's Department of Public Works yesterday called on residents to conserve water voluntarily, thereby avoiding any official bans or restrictions.

J. Peter Scolforo said that daily usage is up from a normal 1 million gallons per day to 1.3 million and even 1.5 million. As a result, the town's reservoir is almost 7 feet below the spillway.

While the prevailing dry period does not constitute a drought, Scolforo said, the problem is serious. According to Scolforo, voluntary restrictions and careful use of water can avert a crisis.

B4 — The Berkshire Eagle, Saturday, August 3, 1991

City & Town



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

With a billboard's support in the background, speakers at yesterday's rally in Lee urge their listeners to lobby state

legislators for a vendor's fee that will give dairy farmers an increase in milk prices.

Farmers rally for vendor's fee

■ MILK, from B1

price is paid to dairymen in whatever state they produce milk, and the vendor's fee would stabilize prices over a three-year period instead of only a one-year one.

Leab was one of eight who spoke to a gathering that numbered slightly more than 70 when the talks started at 11 a.m. but that gradually swelled to nearly 100 by noon when cookies and — what else? — milk were served.

One of the onlookers was Martin H. Deely, president of Lee Lime Corp., who said he had an obvious interest in the issue because farmers buy limestone in large volume to spread on fields as a conditioner and fertilizing agent.

"These people are angry," he observed.

Although wholesale milk pricing is a complicated and labyrinthine subject, the core of it at the moment, farmers say, is that the wholesale price isn't high enough, on average, to generate revenue

that will permit most farmers to pay their bills.

The vendor's fee would have increased the price by the amount that Leab said is needed because the fee would have been assessed against all whole milk processed and sold in Massachusetts, even if produced out of state, but would have been returned to Massachusetts farmers only.

A portion would have been assigned to the WIC — Women, Infants and Children — program.

Cut from budget bill

The bill that would have instituted the fee was tacked onto the state budget bill by the House of Representatives in June but was excluded by the Senate. Weld, who had once led farmers to believe he would sign it, was thus spared the chore.

The current count of Massachusetts dairy farms is about 400, half the number of 10 years ago, and the numbers are still declining, according to state Rep.

Shaun P. Kelly, R-Dalton.

About 10 percent of those farms are in Berkshire County.

Just as hard on Weld as Leab was Rep. Daniel Bosley, D-North Adams, who said if the governor "thinks the vendor fee is expensive, wait until there are no dairy farms and the price of milk really goes up."

"Then the governor will be leading the charge to find a way to reinvigorate the farms."

But that kind of revival won't happen, he said: "No one goes into a business that loses \$20,000 a year."

The importance of dairy farms, besides their contribution to the state economy, he said, is their open land, much of which contains ground-water recharge areas, wildlife habitat and hunting and fishing terrain.

Bipartisan support

The significance of open space to the quality of life and to tourism has been a theme stressed by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council's executive director,

George S. Wislocki, who won dairymen's thanks for his work on behalf of the vendor's fee and other farm issues.

It was a theme echoed by state Rep. Peter J. Larkin, D-Pittsfield, and by Kelly, who also spoke and who demonstrated by their presence that the issue is not a partisan one. Another speaker was Janet LaFond, legislative aide to Rep. Jonathan L. "Jay" Healy, R-Charlemont, a strong advocate for dairy farmers.

Coons subsequently observed that, according to market reports, the predicted average farm price of milk for the present year is \$1.05 a gallon. With the over-order price tacked on, it comes to \$1.17, still below the 1990 average of \$1.27 and the 1989 average of \$1.22. The retail price is more than twice that figure.

Had the vendor's fee been instituted and passed on to the consumer, he and Leab said, it would have added 16 cents to the food bill of the average family that buys two gallons of milk a week.

Lee Selectmen set a tentative date for special meeting

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Board of Selectmen last night set Sept. 26 as the tentative date for the special town meeting that will presumably approve a new, and balanced, budget for the fiscal year that started July 1.

The date is tentative only because the Selectmen did not know last night if the gymnasium at Lee Central School, where the meeting would be held, has already been scheduled for use that night — a Thursday — or not. The board's secretary, Pauline Polard, will find out.

In any event, it will be some night that week, for the 90-day extension granted Massachusetts cities and towns by the Weld administration to establish budgets this year will be up at the end of September.

The date was chosen after the Selectmen conferred with Town Clerk and Treasurer Patricia D. Carlino, who said it would take three or four weeks to draft a properly worded town meeting warrant, and possibly another week to obtain the requisite state approval and then post meeting notices.

Meeting on Monday

Furthermore, town officials won't agree on the new budget's bottom line at least until next Monday when the Selectmen and Finance Committee have agreed to try to hammer it out.

The town meeting representatives on May 9 adopted a fiscal 1992 budget of \$8,567,980 that relied on a \$251,442 override of the tax-levy limit. But town voters, who must approve overrides, killed this one at the annual town election four days later and the budget has been out of balance ever since.

At informal meetings since then, town departments have

submitted cuts of various amounts, and these, coupled with some other savings envisioned by Finance Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennes, may be enough to do away with need for an override.

At least that's what the various officials who are putting together the new budget hope.

Other business

In other action, the Selectmen:
► Talked with former Selectman and Board of Public Works member Joseph Castronova about the security of town of Lee funds on deposit in various bank accounts. Castronova on July 1 said he had read town audits for the previous four years and found that in each year the bulk of town funds was not fully insured or in collateralized accounts.

Last night, he upbraided the Selectmen for failing to read the audits, which, he said, recommended the placement of town funds in such accounts.

Carlino on July 1 and then a week later told Selectmen the bulk of town funds now is deposited in such accounts on the advice of the state Department of Revenue, but said that the advice has only been forthcoming in the past year, largely because of the failure of the Bank of New England.

In prior years, she said, there was no sense of urgency because there had been no history of bank failure in Massachusetts or New England. Even so, she said, former Town Treasurer John J. Nagle at one time deposited town funds in a large number of small accounts because of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.'s insurance limit of \$100,000 per account. State auditors then complained, she said, and Nagle consolidated the money into fewer, larger accounts.

Legislation now pending in Boston would require that all municipal funds be deposited in insured accounts, observed Selectman Joseph F. Dupont.

"Well, I think you guys are negligent," said Castronova. Selectman Martin H. Deely said he felt that was an unfair criticism, particularly if the town were to ignore "perfectly safe investments that might bring a higher return."

In a report submitted to the Selectmen on July 9, Carlino said \$3.02 million of town money was in insured or collateralized accounts as of that date. Meanwhile, \$462,000 remained uninsured but was in various banks "for purposes of monthly cash flow which will be payable."



Visitors are flocking to the restored Sandy Beach on Laurel Lake in Lee.

In Lee Advocate

8/7/91

Beach returns to glory days

Five years ago, when Deidre Consolati became chairman of the Sandy Beach Committee in Lee, she recalled the glory days of the beach on Laurel Lake — and wanted to bring them back.

Starting up an ambitious restoration plan, Consolati lobbied to increase the beach budget, enlisted the help of town businesses, residents and organizations and encouraged more people to visit.

"What I envisioned was something that was a visual delight with a very relaxed, fun atmosphere and at the same time very safe," Consolati says.

Each year, Consolati says she has added more to the beach and as the dog days of August descend onto the Berkshires, the new-and-improved beach — decorated with flowers and pastel chairs

Continued on page 10

Sandy Beach restored to its former self

Continued from page 1 Advocate
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and picnic tables — is one of the town's hottest spots.

"The whole thing has taken on a life of its own," Consolati says of the beach restoration. "There have been a lot of people who have helped. The most satisfying thing was to see the Lee people who dropped the beach, built their own pools and established a whole new scene, now coming back to the beach."

The town beach is located off U.S. Routes 7 and 20 on Laurel Lake. The property — which is owned by Col. Wilde — is at the end of a dead-end road at the south end of the lake. Unlike almost every other town beach in the county, the Lee beach is free and open to residents and non-residents alike.

Given to the town in 1920, the beach became very popular with residents and tourists. It attained maximum popularity in 1950, whereupon the selectmen closed it to non-residents because of the crowds. The beach gradually deteriorated, however, and moved lower in the town's budget priorities.

Consolati, who is a columnist for the SOUTH ADVOCATE, says that when she joined the beach committee, the beach budget had remained unchanged for 12 years. Consolati, who admits to being a free spender when it comes to the beach, convinced the town representatives to more than double the budget to \$18,000 and then began the restoration project.

After first improving the water-safety program and beginning a "full-scale swimming program" free for local children, the town repaired the pothole-ridden road to the beach. The beach itself was relandscaped, the dilapidated beach house was restored and a volleyball net was placed at the beach — "That has become very popular," Consolati says.

Telephone lines and floodlights were installed and new chairs and tables were built and painted for the beach. Hours were extended from 10 to 5 to 9 to 9. This year, Consolati even planted a flower garden to help beautify the site.

"It has become a cooperative effort," Consolati says. "I love it when people step forward to help without anybody asking for it. That's happened all the time." Among those who have assisted at the beach are the Lee Kiwanis Club, the Lee Scuba Club, Berkshire County Sheriff Carmen C. Massimiano, the Lee High Technology Club, Dave Walker, Golden Hill Nursery, Convenience Plus and Tim Hickey.

During the recent heat wave, people came to the town beach in droves. Consolati estimates that between 125 and 400 people will visit the beach on a hot, sunny day.

One benefit was the enhancement of Laurel Lake. Plagued by a worsening weed problem, the town has adopted a comprehensive weed-reduction program to make the lake an attractive place to swim and to look at, she says.

"I would like to think we're making good headway with the lake," she says. "The lake has been enhanced."

Worst of times can be best of times for new businesses

With all the bad economic news recently, one might think that starting a new business now would be a pretty poor idea. But that might be an inaccurate perception, according to some county entrepreneurs.

"Now might be the best time," says Michelle Geitz, who opened a new gift store called *Where'd You Get That Hat?* in Williamstown six weeks ago. "There are a lot of things about opening a store now that are good."

With the changing economic times, many new opportunities knock, says Lorraine Heidemann, executive director of Berkshire Business Ventures in Pittsfield. The agency serves as an incubator for new businesses.

Indeed, with layoffs occurring at so many of the region's larger companies, Heidemann says new businesses offer the best opportunity for economic growth in the county.

"Nationally, small businesses are responsible for more employment growth than the larger companies. While the number of jobs at companies with 500-or-more people had seen a 15 percent loss in employees, businesses that employ nine-to-19 people have shown a 17-to-18 percent growth in jobs. Most new businesses are small businesses. That's where a lot of the potential lies," Heidemann says.

But that doesn't mean starting a new store or business in rough times is an easy task. Financing is hard to come by, spending is down and people are more cautious in their buying habits, she says.

To make a new business, she continues, the owner will have to work harder and develop a strong business plan with a very good product or service. If a new business succeeds in times like these, she says, it will almost certainly have a strong long-term future.

Times are changing

"Everybody could make money in the 1980s; they just opened a door with a sign and the money came in," Heidemann says. "Now, when times are tough, they don't know how to deal with it and a lot of people are struggling because of that. If they learned how to be careful and conservative in the beginning, they wouldn't have the problems they're having now."

In addition to learning how to be a good businessperson right away, owners of new businesses now have several advantages, the main one being that suppliers often offer products at discount prices and are more willing to give easier credit standards, and rent for office and store space is down. In one example in North Adams, Scarafoni Associates offered free rent to anyone who wanted to occupy the former England Brothers store on Main Street.

"The big companies are willing to talk to anybody at any size. It's a big help," Geitz says. "I'm getting good buys with 25 percent discounts."

Geitz says she bought many of her shelves and counters from Roberts Co. in North Adams when it closed, so the start-up costs of her store were reduced. Tradespeople have been very helpful in doing work at the store and the business community at large has been very supportive, she says. She owns the store with her husband, Ken.

Supportive communities

"Everybody wants you to succeed. People have been unbelievably supportive," she says.



Glenn Larsen is one of many businesspeople who believes a new business can succeed despite the times. He recently opened *Summertimes* restaurant in Lee.

Selling the right product at the right price also helps, she says. By offering novelty items at relatively low prices, she says, the store offers something people want.

"People will come in here because they need a good time," Geitz says.

In Lee, Glenn Larsen says he, too, hopes to offer good food at good prices at his new restaurant, *Summertimes*. Larsen bought the downtown restaurant and four-room inn, formerly *The Place*, at a foreclosure auction this spring.

Working 14 hours a day, six days a week, Larsen says he

has done much of the work himself, but adds that "the whole town of Lee has helped."

By working hard, renovating the building and offering a good product, Larsen says he expects to succeed.

"Even if it's slow you have to stay open and be consistent. You've really got to stick to it," he says.

For Larsen, opening the restaurant was personal dream he wanted to fulfill.

"If you wait for good times, it will never happen," observes Larsen's mother, Jutta Larsen. "You'll be an old man and die before that happens. You have to work hard, good times or bad."

Lee may avoid override; S'men set town meeting

Lee town officials say they will most likely be able to avoid asking residents for an override of Proposition 2 1/2 this fall.

Although the town's 1992 budget was initially expected to require an override of \$200,000 or more, with the arrival of state-aid figures and numerous proposed cuts, officials say they can keep town spending within the constraints of Proposition 2 1/2.

"It's close, but it looks like we'll be able to make it," Town Treasurer Patricia Carlino says. She adds, however, that the final figures will not be completed until later this month.

In the meantime, the Lee Selectmen tentatively scheduled Monday a special Town Meeting to be held Sept. 26 for town representatives to vote on cuts in the \$8.5 million budget approved in May.

Faced with the possibility of an override this spring, the Finance Committee met with town department heads to find ways to scrimp, save and skim items from the town budget. After a marathon session, the board found enough minor items to cut that would save the town about \$100,000 this year.

The remainder of the deficit (about \$140,000), Finance Committee members said, could be paid for with leftover funds from various insurance accounts.

Carlino says the town built up an insurance fund in the late 1980s when the town dropped its liability insurance and became self-insured for three years. Although three possible insurance claims are left over from that time, Carlino says it seems that enough money will be available to help cope with this year's budgetary shortfall.

Nevertheless, cuts that will come up for vote at the special Town Meeting will mean cuts in services.

Included on the list of cuts were proposals to postpone hiring a town administrator, cutting a crossing-guard position, eliminating a part-time clerk position in the assessor's office, eliminating home delivery of town reports, postponing capital projects and making minor reductions in almost every department in town. Unaf-

ected in the budget-cutting process was the school department, which submitted a budget equal to last year's budget. The department underspent its budget last year by several thousand dollars, but Superintendent Henry Zukowski says the schools have been run with great care to keep costs down.

With many Lee residents out of work and struggling to make ends meet, voters overwhelmingly rejected the override request in the spring. The vote convinced town officials, some of whom strongly advocated an override, that dramatic cuts needed to be made to avoid more increases in taxes.

"It's a pretty important issue for a lot of people, so we'll have to try to avoid an override if we can," says Selectman Martin Deely, who voted for the override in May, but says he will comply with the wishes of the townspeople.

town topics

Oak 'N Spruce pays Lee \$122K bill

The financially strapped town of Lee got some welcome news this week when two resorts paid their overdue tax bills totaling about \$150,000.

Town Treasurer Patricia Carlino says she received a \$25,000 check from the Bank of Boston for overdue taxes at Chanterwood resort on Goose Pond and a \$122,579.34 check from Oak 'N Spruce Resort for the resort's 1990 tax bill. Oak 'N Spruce has filed for bankruptcy to try to settle its overdue bills.

"Last week I called (Oak 'N Spruce) up and I told them they had two options: Pay up or we'll foreclose," Carlino said Monday afternoon. "This morning I got a check in the mail from them."

Advocate 8-7-91

South county TV station gets underway

Community Television in Southern Berkshire hopes to develop some south-county residents into local television producers. Having won a political battle in securing a total of \$20,000 from Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and Great Barrington for public-access television on Century Cable TV, CTSB has spent most of that money on new equipment.

On line so far is a new videocamera, editing equipment, lighting, microphones and a character generator to improve titles on the Channel 11 TV screen, says Sam Sorrentino, a member of the CTSB board and owner of Cutting Edge Video in Lee.

CTSB hopes to use the equipment to produce local shows that will be transmitted on the public-access station, Channel 11. Sorrentino says seminars will be held to teach people how to produce shows.

"There is interest in doing it," Sorrentino says. "Once we start doing some stuff there will be even more interest. We're going to do a show ourselves on who we are and what local-access video is."

Lee faces decisions on closing landfill and on longterm disposal of solid waste

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 8/9/91

LEE — This town is going to have to decide soon when it will close its Woodland Road landfill and when it will make some other decisions about solid-waste disposal that will have a significant impact on annual budgets, public works officials learned this week.

To address some of these issues, the Board of Public Works will meet with the Board of Health at 7:30 p.m. Monday at Town Hall, Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo said.

Scolforo has been drafting a memorandum to the board members to spell out the apparent choices facing the town as a result of new state Department of Environmental Protection trash-disposal and landfill regulations adopted last year.

The immediate choices, he suggested, are whether to close the landfill by June 30 next year or to obtain a new permit at a cost of about \$10,000 to operate it until Dec. 31, 1993.

In connection with either of these are some additional choices: whether to buy adjacent land and install a lined landfill for use after Jan. 1, 1994; whether to sign a memorandum of agreement with Vicon Recovery Associates of Pittsfield to incinerate the town's domestic rubbish, or whether to plan to ship rubbish to one of the big private landfills in the Chicopee-Holyoke-Springfield area on a temporary or permanent basis.

Rising cost

Whatever choices are made, the cost of solid-waste disposal in Lee is going to rise, Scolforo said, from what is estimated to be roughly \$25 a ton — exclusive of trucking — to a cost between \$70 and \$75 a ton.

A year ago, engineers estimated that buying additional land and installing a lined landfill would cost about \$10 million, a sum that would probably be funded through a 15-year bond issue.

The annual town meeting in 1990 authorized an expenditure of a little more than \$1 million to acquire 18 acres adjacent to the present landfill, an acquisition Scolforo suggests would be a wise

one no matter what form of trash disposal is finally decided.

The town needs space for recycling and for composting leaves and yard waste, also called for by DEP regulations, he said.

Estimates, he added, are that disposal costs in a year or two will be about \$70 to \$75 a ton no matter what option is chosen. There could be some small differences that might be increased by differences in transportation costs. Hauling trash to Vicon in Pittsfield would cost more than hauling it to Woodland Road in Lee, for example.

But whatever decision is made, the town is going to have to wrestle very soon with the decision on when to close the present landfill, Scolforo said.

Rules cited

The DEP regulations call for engineering plans detailing how towns will operate their landfills and close them. The regulations also require that after Jan. 1, 1994, all landfilled rubbish must be deposited in lined landfills.

Last Monday night, Lee's consulting engineers spelled out for the Board of Public Works some of the options, from the capping of the present landfill to installing a lined one or incinerating rubbish at Vicon.

But whatever the choice, the present landfill is going to have to be capped under the DEP regulations, which require graded slopes topped by layers of gravel, clay and topsoil that make up a covering mantle 3½ feet thick.

Michael R. Parsons, assistant chief engineer for Tighe & Bond consulting engineers of Westfield, said that at current prices, capping could cost \$750,000 or more.

The town will also have to spend \$35,000 to \$40,000 on attendant engineering and design work to fulfill requirements for site assessments required by the state to determine how best to guard against ground-water contamination and the like.

Parsons and a colleague, David M. Lenart, met with the Public Works Board Monday at Scolforo's request.

State Department of Environ-

mental Protection regulations require not only that landfills be capped to shed water and avoid ground-water contamination, but also that any landfill operated after December 1993 be lined with a plastic membrane atop a 2-foot layer of compacted clay and then outfitted with drain pipes to collect leachate that must be drawn off and funneled into sewage-treatment systems instead of allowed to seep into the earth.

The present landfill has only two or three years' more capacity, said Scolforo, and if landfilling is going to be Lee's way of disposing of rubbish and garbage in the years after that, the town needs to make the decision and be prepared for the cost.

Disposing of trash at the Vicon incinerator would mean avoidance of the massive cost of a lined landfill, consultants agreed, but if Vicon were to have to turn Lee away at some time because it couldn't handle the volume of rubbish, then the town would have to truck it elsewhere.

"Down the pike" is the way Parsons described this choice, referring to the transportation of rubbish down the Massachusetts Turnpike to one of the private landfills in the Connecticut River Valley. A number of towns in Berkshire County send trash to

those landfills, either on a constant or intermittent basis.

However, the likelihood that Vicon would turn Lee away if Lee were to sign a trash-delivery agreement with Vicon is a remote one, according to Vicon's manager, Llewellyn E. Clark of Dalton.

Declining volume

He told the Public Works Board last month that the volume of municipal trash coming to the company's incinerators on Hubbard Avenue in Pittsfield has declined in the past year and a half, largely because of recycling programs but also because of the depressed economy.

At present, Vicon, under contract, takes all of Pittsfield's municipal rubbish and also accepts trash from six surrounding towns under memorandums of agreement. A similar memorandum could be established for Lee, Clark said.

Parsons advised Lee's Public Works Board Monday that if the town plans to shut down its landfill by June 30 next year, it should notify the DEP by January. If the town is going to operate the landfill after June 30, it can do so until December 1993, he said, but the repermitting process will cost about \$10,000.



Lee steeple and opera Advocates to benefit

Here's a chance to help out two worthy causes at one event. On Aug. 11 at 8 p.m. members of the Berkshire Opera Company will perform musical comedy and opera selections in a joint benefit for the opera and the restoration of the First Congregational Church in Lee.

The Rev. Walter Ryan, co-chairman of the drive to restore the church and steeple, says the church is raising \$25,000 needed to complete the final phase of the project: painting the exterior and repairing woodwork. A portion of the proceeds from the concert will be used for that, and the rest to support opera programs.

The concert will take place at the church on Park Place in Lee. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the door.

Lee Weighs Gas Station Sign Options

LEE— Representatives from Sandri Oil, Inc. met with the Selectmen last week to discuss sign options for the suppliers' renovation of the Sonoco gas station, currently owned by Jim Kelly.

Laurence Jarvis of Greenfield, MA, requested the permission of the board to erect a canopy, as a building, with six square footage of sign on either side of the construction.

Selectman Joseph Dupont, who is a member of the newly formed sign committee, said that under the current provisions of the sign by-laws, this project is not allowed.

Dupont said that if Jarvis

wishes to consider the canopy to be a structure, then it is not limited to the sign by-laws. However, a structure can only have a sign on one side.

Under current provisions, the service station is permitted only one free-standing sign and one sign on the standing building.

Dupont said that canopies are one of the major problems with which the committee has to deal.

"We're hoping to make rules which will standardize everybody," said Dupont in response to Jarvis' complaint that no other stations in town were affected by these standards.

"It means a lot of meetings and a lot of work," said the chairman of the Sign Committee, who was also present.

Sandri hopes to begin renovation of the station by the end of September.

The Sign Committee does not expect any results for another three months.

Advocate 8-14-91
**Despite lower prices, homes
are still out of reach for many**

Construction crews broke ground last week in Lee for a publicly funded 16-unit affordable-housing project.

Several towns are seeking \$850,000 in low-interest loans for the rehabilitation of south-county homes that would be used for apartments.

Lee contractor Thomas Garrity plans to build six new apartments in Lee to meet a growing demand for apartments. Despite a regulatory setback last week which led to laying off his work crew, Garrity still plans to proceed with his plans.

Despite the well-publicized slump in the real-estate market, both housing officials and landlords in both the private and public sector say that a demand exists for more and better low- and moderate-income housing in south county.

"There's no question there's a need for more adequate housing," says Peter Kolodziej, sanitarian for Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge. "We've had problems in all three towns. You wouldn't think so, but there's a section of Stockbridge where we've had a lot of complaints."

Although housing prices have leveled off and in some cases dropped, Lee Housing Authority member Francis Foley says it is still very hard to buy a house.

"I know it's very difficult because my daughter is looking for a place to live. Both she and her husband work and they are having a very tough time," he says.

Foley compares her situation to his own when he moved to Lee in the early 1960s. As the sole income earner in the family, he says it was much easier 30 years ago to buy a home than it is now.

Many people are scrambling for work, he says, and it has also become harder to get loans. One of the results of the

**"There's no question there's a need
for more adequate housing. We've
had problems in all three towns."**

declining economy, he says, is a worsening in local housing conditions. The state of the housing stock in Lee, he says, helped prompt the Housing Authority to proceed with plans to build the controversial affordable-housing project in Lee.

"If you've ever been in some of the family housing, you'd know why some people would want to move to a new place. Some people would call them slums," Foley says.

Assigning blame for housing problems, he says, is difficult. In some cases landlords neglect to make repairs and keep buildings up to standards, in other cases tenants do

Continued

the damage themselves, and in other instances landlords have little money because tenants are failing to make rent payments as a result of the poor economic times.

"It's complicated as hell," Foley says. "There isn't a simple solution. All you can do is work at it."

By building the new housing project on Marble Street in conjunction with Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Foley says officials hope to both offer new apartments that are managed properly and to give residents an alternative place to live.

"Some people simply have no place to go," Kolodziej says. "I've had people cry and cry (when I respond to complaints) and say, 'Don't take any action. I've got no place to go.' Housing is short and rents are high. I'd like to see towns do more to apply for funds to upgrade things."

Several south-county towns have joined together with West Stockbridge as a lead town applying for money for rehabilitation projects. But with budget cuts hitting government at all levels, less public money is available to go around.

And while some housing officials and landlords say it is hard to get loans, several banks, such as Lee Bank, First National Bank of the Berkshires and Berkshire County Savings Bank, have started their own programs to assist first-time homebuyers. Programs range from low-interest mortgages to an entire seminar on buying a house, provided by Berkshire County Savings Bank.



Construction crews have begun work on a 16-unit, eight-building affordable housing complex on Marble Street in Lee

Janet Demary, vice president and mortgage officer at Berkshire County Savings Bank, says that home mortgages for homes at the low end of the market are up compared with last year.

"Because the prices have come down and interest rates are down, it's getting easier to qualify for housing," she says. "Banks are doing what they can to help. Now is the time to buy a home."

But with rising unemployment and layoffs in the manufacturing sector, homes for large groups of potential homebuyers remain out of reach. If the economy worsens, officials expect the situation to deteriorate further.

"This is not an inappropriate time to offer housing," Foley says of the Lee housing project. "Things are going to be tough. There's going to be a need for more housing like this in the future."

Anticipating that need, Thomas Garrity proposes to build six new apartments in Lee. But Garrity's project partially illustrates another problem in building new housing. Garrity was forced to lay off his work crew last week when the town notified him that he would have to apply for a special permit, for the second time, for the project.

Kolodziej says that ever-stricter regulations have made it more difficult and expensive for landlords to stay within building codes.

"It all costs money," Kolodziej says. "It's a two-way street. I've seen it on both ends. The landlord tends to get the negative end of the stick, but it isn't always like that."

Advocate 8-14-91
**Lee to close landfill,
take trash to Vicon?**

The Lee Department of Public Works is recommending that the town close its landfill in three months and begin disposing of its waste at the Vicon Resource Recovery incinerator in Pittsfield.

The move, which has officially to be voted on by the Lee Board of Health, would take the town out of the landfill business and cost the town about four times as much as it does now to dispose of waste.

Although the Board of Health has legal jurisdiction over the town's waste-disposal methods, practically, the DPW has operated the landfill and studied different alternatives for waste disposal. Board of Health members have said they will follow the recommendation of the DPW.

"We think the town should go with Vicon and we're concerned that if we wait we'll miss the boat," DPW member John Piacquadio says.

Vicon president Llewellyn Clark told Lee officials a month ago that his plant has the capacity to add one-or-two more towns to its list of clients. Other towns are interested in using the waste-to-energy plant, he says.

Faced with the town's landfill reaching

capacity within a year or two, the Lee Selectmen say they agree the town should go with Vicon.

"Who's going to spend \$6 million or \$7 million to stay in the landfill business?" asks Selectman Martin Deely.

The main alternative to Vicon would be to expand the town's present landfill at the cost of several million dollars. As it is, the town expects to spend about \$1 million in closing the landfill and another \$1 million to buy land for expanding the landfill. Despite going with Vicon, town officials say they would like to buy land now for possible future expansions and for commercial uses.

DPW member Martin Barenski disagrees with his board's decision, saying that the town could wait until the end of 1993 before closing its landfill.

Fees at Vicon will quadruple the town's solid-waste-disposal expense from \$60,000 a year to about \$250,000, he says, and it would be wiser to wait to make the switch. Other Lee officials, however, say they are anxious about not being allowed into Vicon after 1993, in which case the town would have to grapple with the more costly and difficult prospect of expanding its own landfill.

The Berkshire Eagle, Thursday, August 15, 1991 — B5

In the Berkshires

Town meeting delegate sought in Lee

LEE — Town meeting representatives in District 4, which embraces the western section of town down to South Lee, are inviting interested district voters to submit their names to fill a vacancy in the delegation. A selection will be made Aug. 29.

Annette Gordon, who lived on Richmond Avenue, moved away during the past year, leaving the vacancy. Her position will be filled by vote of other representatives for the period between Aug. 30 and the annual election in May, when the seat will go on the election ballot as a two-year seat. Terms normally are for three years.

Interested people should send letters to Stephen Cozzaglio at RR1, Box 368, Lee 01238-9773. He should receive them no later than Monday, Aug. 26.

Interviews will be conducted Aug. 29 in the conference room at Lee Central School, starting at 7:15 p.m., Cozzaglio said.

At the same time, delegation members will elect a chairman. Gordon held that post as well.

Lee toll booths banned in 1992? Advocate 8-14-91

Hoping to impose guidelines on how weekend toll booths by area organizations can be done, the Lee Selectmen concluded Monday that they would disallow toll booths along Main Street effective Jan. 1, 1992.

The decision came after months of dissatisfaction with the rising popularity of groups trying to raise money by soliciting motorists on Main Street during busy weekends.

The selectmen say they are concerned both about the safety of people on the streets and the plight of motorists being asked for money. While the toll booths have evidently proven to be a successful way to raise money, town officials say they have become a nuisance to Lee drivers.

In making the decision, however, the board authorized an Aug. 31 toll booth for the Pee Wee Junior Football League. "It wouldn't be fair to just do it now," Selectmen's Chairman Diane Roosa said of the ban.

Creative cutting brings Lee to brink of balanced budget

By Donna B. Mattoon
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — By dint of some creative cutting, the chairman of the Finance Committee has accumulated almost enough savings to present a balanced budget to town representatives at a special town meeting Sept. 26.

"We're real close, that's the message," John E. DeVarennnes told the Selectmen on Monday evening. "I think we can make it. We're not talking disaster anymore."

He proposed that the town establish some serious ground rules before the budget process begins next year so that the scenario surrounding this year's budget does not get a repeat performance.

That will require facing some harsh realities, DeVarennnes said, including the fact that if insurance is going to increase by 13 percent, other areas will have to sacrifice accordingly.

"Somebody is going to have to give something up," he said.

All smiles

Despite his warning, the Selectmen were all smiles after DeVarennnes taped a series of charts on the wall to illustrate the highs and lows of the current budget process.

The bottom line, he said, is now only a few thousand dollars shy of a balanced budget. If the numbers continue to fall into place, the impact on the tax rate will be 15 to 20 cents per \$1,000 of valuation. In addition, he wants to propose a warrant article that would ask voters to approve taking \$50,000 from available funds to help reduce the impact a nickel or so more.

The Selectmen appeared pleased with DeVarennnes' work and congratulated him on a job well done. He and the Finance Committee had begun to scrutinizing the proposed fiscal 1992 budget of \$8,567,980 after it was adopted by town meeting representatives. That budget hinged on a \$251,442 override of the tax levy limit under Proposition 2½.

Voters put the kibosh on the

override at the annual town election in May. Since then, town officials have been trying to reduce the budget — initially by asking departments to submit voluntary cuts and then by wielding the knife themselves.

According to DeVarennnes, the voluntary cuts produced \$156,716 in savings. Further reductions brought in an additional \$78,000, for a total of approximately \$235,000, which was more than required.

DeVarennnes went back over the budgets and restored money to some of the most critical spots, such as school crossing guards, the Council on Aging and a paint job for the Central Fire Station, he said.

The finance chairman concluded his presentation with items he hopes will be studied more closely at a future meeting, including the possibility that town employees increase their

insurance contribution from 10 percent to 25 percent, phased in over a three-year period. Such a move could save the town \$75,000, DeVarennnes said.

He also suggested that the town transfer \$200,000 from an existing insurance fund to available cash.

The warrant will be ready for review by Sept. 4 and will be posted by Sept. 11.

Other business

In other business Monday, the Selectmen learned that the Department of Public Works Board had recommended that the town sign a memorandum of agreement with Vicon Recovery Associates of Pittsfield.

Nonetheless, the Board of Health has yet to vote on the issue, and it is the governing authority on whether the town signs to dispose of its trash with Vicon.

In other action, the Selectmen:

► Approved the Pee Wee Junior Football League's request for a tollbooth Aug. 31 but agreed that no more organizations will be allowed to solicit traffic for donations until a policy for such activity is approved.

► Approved a change in license for Belden Tavern, which is in the process of constructing an addition for banquet facilities.

► Agreed to ask Williamstown officials to attend a meeting to discuss the advantages of a town administrator form of government.

Lee Examines Administrator

LEE — The Board of Selectmen is investigating new definition for the position of Town Administrator for Lee.

Selectman Martin Deely said that the position now entails primarily organizational responsibilities. The Board envisions future alterations which would give the administrator fiscal control as well.

Essentially what the Selectmen desire is the same definition which was approved a year ago in Town Meeting only to be changed upon entering legislation in Boston.

This position would provide for a fiscal organizer in charge of a financial team of appointed officials including the Board of Assessors, town clerk, treasurer, and tax collector — all of whom are currently elected.

The selectmen hope that such a position would provide a tighter team to work with the Finance Committee in budget negotiations.

"If you have an individual in charge of operations, he or she ought to have the opportunity to handle fiscal aspects as well," said Deely.

The Board of Selectmen announced at a meeting this week that they are hoping to schedule an informal meeting with the Board of Selectmen of Williamstown and their town administrator, Steven Ledoux, who currently plays the type of role which the Selectmen would like to see initiated in Lee.

Although the town does not have the funds to employ a town administrator until the January 1, 1992, it is important that the selectmen begin their work on the project soon.

Lee May Close Landfill

LEE — The DPW presented the Board of Selectmen with their recommendation that the town of Lee close its landfill and join with Pittsfield-based Vicon Resource Recovery incinerator as soon as possible, preferably within the next three months.

The final decision awaits the signature of approval from the Board of Health, but "The Board of Health recommended that we go to Vicon before we took the vote," said John Piacquadio, who represented the DPW.

Lester Clarke, a member of the Board of Health, said that he feels the Board will sign the approval soon.

For the town, joining Vicon will cost nothing, and it will save money in the future.

Plans to construct a new multi-million dollar landfill will be dumped, and Lee will be effectively retired from the landfill business.

Hauler Nelson Daley confirmed that his business will benefit from this decision since individuals will no longer be able to dispose of their own trash.

He also said that dealing with Vicon will increase hauling fees, since he will be charged considerably greater dumping fees by Vicon than he currently pays to dump in Lee. The added mileage to Pittsfield will also

boost the fee.

At the same time, he hopes that it will increase recycling, as a yearly permit to Lee's recycling station costs a mere \$1. This station will remain open when the dump closes.

As a hauler, Daley will charge a sliding rate for disposal depending on the amount of solid refuse a household sends him per week.

Daley said that currently, the residents of Lee have been spoiled with the novelty of their own dump, which, at \$25, boasts one of the lowest yearly permit rates for disposal in the county.

"It's just like catching up with everyone else," he said.

By law, the town could wait for two more years to close the dump and then make the decision to join Vicon or construct a new landfill.

However, the DPW and other officials are afraid that in waiting too long, they will see the opportunity pass by.

"We could stay with this landfill until January, '94, but then we give up this opportunity," Piacquadio said.

When the Board of Selectmen and DPW met with Vicon president Llewellyn Clark last month, he informed them that the company could only provide service to one or two more towns with their present facilities.

Record 8-16-91

Record 8-16-91

Lee's Joe Toole looks south for new challenges

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 8-16-91

LEE — To townspeople in Lee, Joseph M. Toole is the hometown boy who made good. Right in his own back yard. Right out of Lee High School in 1973.

Got his real estate broker's license when he was 18. Bought his dad's insurance agency when he was 22. Was elected town moderator when he was 24.

For these and other reasons, the curiosity of a number of residents is understandably aroused by reports that Joe Toole is pulling up stakes, is going to leave the old hometown. How come?

Toole allows that yes, he and his wife, the former Lynn Masiero, and their four children will be moving south at the end of the month — not for good, but for the winter months with, incidentally, the fall and the spring months thrown in.

It has to do with creativity, with wanting to conquer new territory. "I like projects," Toole said, "new challenges."

He and his wife have no plans to change their voting residence from Lee, he said, but they have leased a house on Sanibel Island off the west coast of Florida for the year and will move there in time to put the children in school.

Change of environment

They have also rented, to another family, their own home, a mid-19th century farmhouse at 134 Orchard St. that is surrounded by enough land to pasture their riding horses, which are being boarded by a friend.

"I'm an entrepreneur," said Toole, "and the best thing for an entrepreneur is an environment where there are a lot of opportunities." Florida seems to offer more of them, say, in real estate, than do

The Berkshires, he believes — an assessment with which many Berkshire residents quite likely would agree.

Combining an opportunity-laden environment with a pleasant climate, Toole conceded, approaches what some might call the best of all worlds.

On top of this, he added, the children — Luke, 10, Lawrence, 8, Colin, 6, and Mollie, 4 — "really enjoy summer sports and the water, and they're very excited." Their parents, it might be added, enjoy sailing as well.

Joe Toole, 36, next to the youngest of nine children, showed early that he was headed for success. Two years after graduating from high school, he was named chairman of Lee's United Community Fund drive and promptly took it over the top, getting solicitors and other volunteers to raise some \$3,000 more than the \$46,000 goal.

It was the first time in three years that the campaign had topped its goal, and it happened in a period when the economy was in contraction, much as it is today.

First thoughts of Florida

He had already established his own real estate agency and in another three years would buy the Lawrence V. Toole Insurance Agency from his father, who in retirement spent winters in Naples, Fla.

"Our first thoughts of Florida started in the late '70s when we would go down to visit my parents," Toole recalled. "I guess the seeds were planted then: spend the winter in Florida and then enjoy summer in the Berkshires."

In 1987, he sold his real estate agency to Dorothy Walchenbach — it is now Carriage House Realty — and, then in 1990, sold the insurance agency to his brother John E. Toole, who had been vice president.

He felt, he said, that those businesses, as successful as they were, were "stifling my creative interest," an interest that had already been ignited when he learned in 1989 that the old St. Mary's Academy building was being offered for \$1 to anyone that would remove it from its Academy Street site. He promptly took it on, and in October — after a year and a half's renovation and remodeling at a cost of more than \$500,000 — he opened it as Chambery Inn, which he says is "doing exceedingly well."

Early this summer, Toole opened within the inn the Pierre Lapin Gallerie, a retail shop for handmade crafts and decorations. That, too, is doing well, he said.

"Frankly," he acknowledged, "if the inn hadn't been a success, I would have been reluctant to try this move to Florida."

But he plans to return periodically to Lee because, he said, he still has commitments in the Berkshires that he intends to

keep. These include:

► Ownership of the inn. It is being managed by Marilyn Kelly, who is the proprietor of Sullivan's Station restaurant diagonally across the street. "She does a phenomenal job," he said.

► Memberships on the boards of trustees of Lee Savings Bank and the Berkshire Theatre Festival in Stockbridge.

► His position as town moderator, to which he was elected in 1979 and each year since then. If he should eventually move full time to Florida, he said, he could obviously not remain an elected official of the town. But until then, he is going to moderate town meetings. The next one will be Sept. 26.

Sometime next year the Tooles will have a better idea whether they will make the move a permanent one — whether, as Toole says, "we really enjoy the climate, and if the children adjust and are happy."

One might think that a young man with an evident Midas touch — he and his wife also own a vacation home at Jamestown, R.I. — would stir resentment among the home folks, but if Lee residents view Toole this way, it doesn't show. "I'm sure some people envy his ability," said one resident, "but he is well-liked."

"He's earned everything he has," said another. "He's been a positive factor in town, and everything he does is first class."



Joseph M. Toole
'I like projects'

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Eagle 8-16-91

Lee building returning to its religious roots



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Returning to its roots, the Caropreso Galleries in Lee building for its services. The structure formerly has been purchased by a church that plans to use the served as a Methodist church.

Gallery is sold to church group

By Gae Elfenbein
Berkshire Eagle Staff 8-19-91

LEE — The Caropreso Galleries auction house on High Street, formerly a Methodist church, is being purchased by Berkshire Bible Church.

The church now holds services at St. Luke's Square at 525 East St., Pittsfield.

Gerard J. Doherty, assistant pastor, has confirmed that the church is purchasing the Caropreso property and said a purchase and sale agreement was signed Tuesday. He said the pastor, the Rev. John Gardner, is out of town and not available for comment regarding the transaction.

Caropreso said he had his last auction at the former church a month ago and has moved his gallery to a building at the Jenifer House in Great Barrington.

"That church is beautiful and has a lot of charm," Caropreso said. "I was operating under a special permit from the town. The only reason I sold was because I was having trouble with one neighbor who kept calling the police about parked cars, but the town was fabulous to me."

He said that the auction gallery has been on the market for \$250,000 and that the purchase price was in that range. The real estate closing on the property is expected to take place in October.

Meanwhile, Doherty said the church is **CHURCH**, continued on B5

■ CHURCH, from B1

renting 5,700 square feet of space in St. Luke's Square.

He said the church owns about 10 acres on New Lenox Road, Lenox, where the congregation had planned to construct a new building.

"Our desire was to build there. We have architects' drawings for it, but at this point in time the cost would be half a million dollars, and we don't have the money."

Instead, he said, since the Lee property became available, church representatives inspected it and found it "structurally sound except for a little cosmetic construction work."

"We're not certain of our long-term plans, but for now this seems to fall nicely into our plans for a lot less money," Doherty said.

Asked what would happen to the Lenox property, he said, "We follow where God leads."

He said it may be that the Lenox land would be sold to help with the purchase of the Lee property, "or we might use the facility in Lee for up to five years and then get funds to build in Lenox."

"But at this point, anything along those lines is just speculation," he added.

Doherty said his church is a "self-governing body that has a spiritual relationship with Greater Grace World Outreach Church in Baltimore, Md." That group is under the direction of Carl Stevens, who headed the former Bible Speaks in Lenox.

One of the principals in the sales transaction was Robert Herring of Lee, who is member of the church. His wife, LuAnn, said the membership comprises ap-

proximately 110 adults and 120 children. Some of them are former members or friends of the Bible Speaks.

As for Caropreso, he says the sale of the building is "one of the best things I ever did." He said he is extremely happy in his new location, where he has 9,000 square feet of retail space and parking for 500 cars. He moved into his new quarters about a month ago.

He said he plans to increase the number of auctions per year from 12 at the former location to 32 during the next year.

"Business is booming. Many of my buyers are from New York, and it's now closer for them and they don't have to go through Stockbridge to get here."



New Great Barrington Savings Bank branch in Lee

Gt. Barrington bank expands north at \$1.2 million price tag

After almost a year of negotiating with three different organizations, the Great Barrington Savings Bank has acquired the Stockbridge and Lee offices of Fleet-Norstar Financial Group.

The bank bought Friday the real estate and \$14.2 million in deposits at the branch offices, Great Barrington Savings Bank president James A. Cunningham Jr. says.

The acquisition price was over \$1.2 million. The breakdown in costs was \$325,000 for the Stockbridge bank, \$400,000 for the Lee bank and about \$500,000 for the deposits -- or a premium of 3.5 percent.

"Everything is in good shape and we're up and running," Cunningham says. "The vast majority of account holders who were designated as sales accounts (with Fleet-Norstar) have gone over to Great Barrington Savings Bank."

With the acquisition, the bank moves its market northward and it also becomes the second-largest savings bank in the county. The additional deposits allow the bank to expand its loan portfolio.

With \$8.8 million in deposits at the Stockbridge branch, Cunningham says his bank's primary interest is in the Stockbridge market where the Great Barrington Savings Bank already has many

clients. The Lee branch has \$5.4 million in deposits.

"Stockbridge was already a significant portion of our market before and this will only enhance that," Cunningham says.

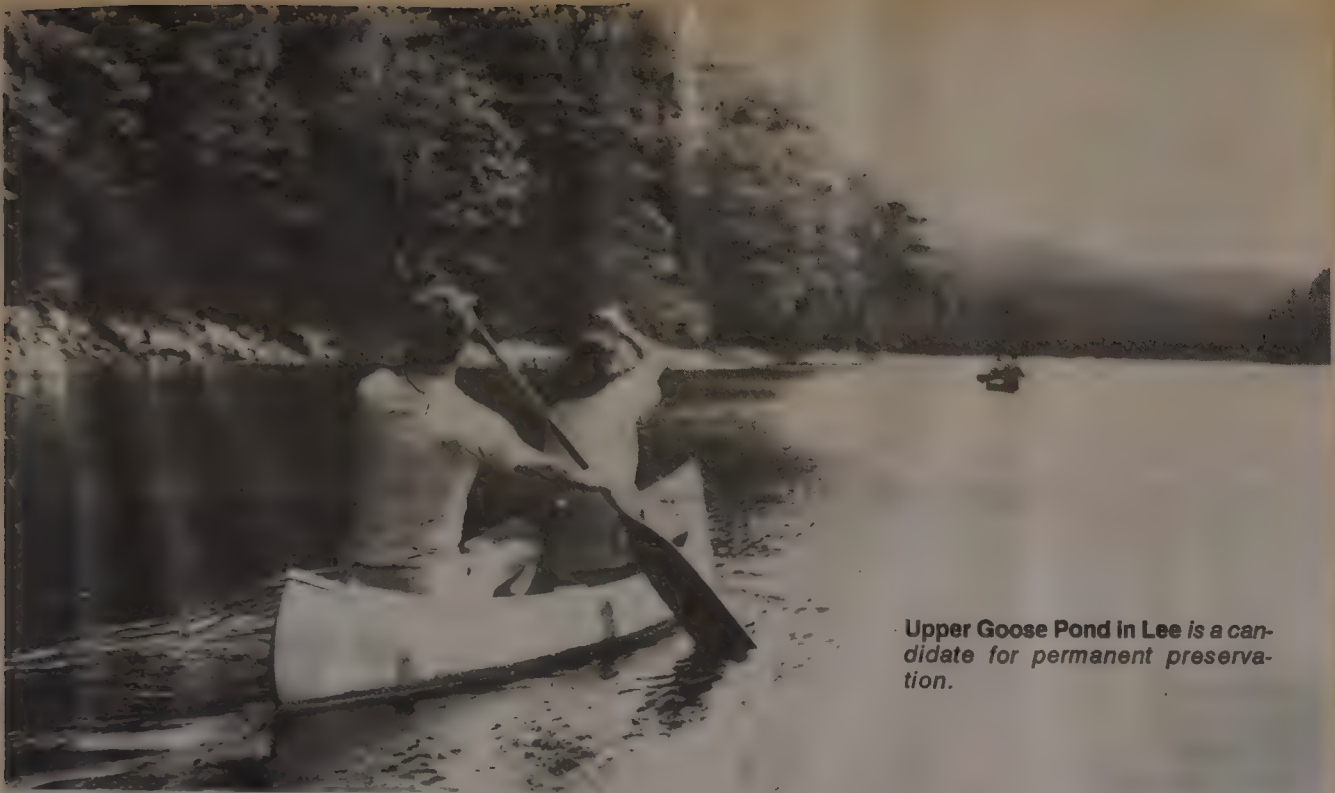
Overall, Cunningham says he expects the expansion to attract some clients immediately, leading to a moderate growth in deposits and then to a gradual increase continuing over the long haul.

In Lee, the bank will be competing with two hometown banks -- Lee Bank and First National Bank of the Berkshires -- and Cunningham says he expects that the branch will not siphon off too much business.

"I think we'll do a better job than Bank of New England, but I really don't foresee us making much of a dent (in Lee)," he says.

Cunningham says he first began negotiations for the purchase a year ago when the bank offices were owned by Bank of New England. In January, however, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. took over the regional bank, and this spring the FDIC sold the bank to Fleet-Norstar.

"It's been a rather difficult process mainly because of the regulatory intervention with Bank of New England and in dealing with three parties," Cunningham says. "The hardest part was finding the correct person to deal with."



Upper Goose Pond in Lee is a candidate for permanent preservation.

State moneycrunchers and land protectors clash at Upper Goose Pond

Advocate

By Erik Bruun

8-21-91

Tucked away above the hurly-burly of activity in Lee is Upper Goose Pond — a pristine lake that has escaped the scars of development that have defaced many Berkshire lakes.

Although public and private land-preservation groups have succeeded in preserving most of the land surrounding the lake, preservationists say that one last, large piece of land near the lake still needs to be preserved.

But that piece — 136.3 acres north of the pond and adjacent to U.S. Route 20 for almost a mile and owned by the Seranaker family — is for sale. Last fall, the state was scheduled to buy the property. But the acquisition fell victim to the state budget crisis and the purchase was postponed.

Now, officials are hoping to convince the state to release the \$235,000 needed to buy the property. The Seranakers' asking price is \$1 million.

Continued on page 13A

Protecting Goose Pond

Advocate

8-21-91

Continued from page 1

"This is a parcel that speaks to acquisition," says George S. Wislocki, director of Berkshire Natural Resources Council. The property abuts existing state, federal and privately protected land; it runs along a mile of federal and state road in the form of Route 20 and the Massachusetts Turnpike; and it has a willing buyer who will sell it for less than market value. "It has everything."

Everything, that is, except for authorization from Gov. William F. Weld and state Public Works Commissioner James Kerasiotes to spend the money through the DPW land-acquisition program.

In an effort to shake that money loose, conservationists from six different state, federal and private open-space-protection agencies met with state Sen. Jane M. Swift, R-North Adams, for a canoe trip along Upper Goose Pond.

The history of the lake was explained, the arguments for preserving the property were presented and the situation with the DPW land-acquisition program was reviewed.

Although Swift says she was impressed by the lake and the need to protect it from development, she says the proposal is one of hundreds of worthwhile ideas that the state is mulling over at a time when it is trying to find ways to cut expenses, not add new ones.

"The prospects of doing this are good — eventually," Swift says. "But money is scarce this year. The growth in the capital-projects budget was astronomical under Dukakis. We are trying to find ways to get it under control. This is extremely important — but so is rebuilding roads in a recession."

So far, the DPW has only agreed to buy

one piece of land for open-space protection since Weld took office. That property, on Martha's Vineyard, cost \$1.5 million, had a long history of negotiations with the state and the local community's help with the purchase; it also had the strong support of the ranking Republican state senator on the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

The Lee parcel has not generated the same kind of local support. Swift says, though, that Keriotis — a Republican — may be willing to provide the money needed for the acquisition.

While Swift lobbies the state for the money, local preservationists say they fear the property may be developed either for homes or as a gravel pit. The property is used by some people to hike to Upper Goose Pond across private property illegally and has been illegally logged.

"At some point the recession will end and this land will become very desirable again," says David Richie of the Appalachian Trail Conference.

"One of the most frightening aspects of the property is that it could be turned into a gravel pit," says Stanley Piatczyc.

The prospect of a development, land preservationists say, would spoil an otherwise successful group effort to preserve Upper Goose Pond. Between the state, Appalachian Trail and The Trustees of Reservations, virtually the entire lake is protected from development. The only existing buildings are a few small cabins accessible only by boat or by foot.

"When you're on the lake, you feel like you're in Wyoming," Piatczyc says.

Wislocki described the lake as one of the best-preserved in the county and the piece of protected land surrounding it as one of the largest in the Berkshires.

Comparing Upper Goose Pond with other Berkshire lakes and to Goose Pond to its west, Wislocki said, "The difference in lakes is dramatic. On one end you're talking wall-to-wall development, and on the other you're talking about one of the most beautiful lakes in New England."

Too many jaywalkers in downtown Lee?

An Aug. 2 a traffic study of Lee's Main Street revealed that vehicular traffic flows relatively well in the center of town but the flow of pedestrian traffic across streets may be a problem.

During 7.5 hours of observation, state Department of Public Works car counters spotted 72 crosswalk violations in the center of Lee.

Lee Selectmen literally raised their eyebrows when they heard the number and board members immediately voted to pass the information on to the Lee Police Department. The report also states there were five U-turns and eight other illegal turns made on Main Street during the observation period. Board members added that they, too, have witnessed an increase in U-turns on Main Street recently.

The state study reports that there were few delays in parking or traffic flow on Main Street. Delays in traffic at the Railroad and Eaton street intersections generally were no more than 15 to 30 seconds, according to the report.

Having received the report, the Lee Traffic Commission recommended that no changes be made in the town's diagonal parking plan.

In a related matter, the selectmen voted to eliminate one parking place on Main Street in front of McClelland's Drug Store to add space for the bus stop.

Reading class at Lee Library promotes creativity

Gathered at the Lee Library last week were about two score of young authors celebrating a summer season of reading and writing.

The celebration included a raffle, Timothy Wenk magic show and distribution of rewards for a storywriting contest. Apple Tree Books of Lee sponsored the awards, and the Lee Kiwanis and library sponsored the celebration.

"We had a lot of fun this year," says librarian Nancy Masusco. "There were a lot of excellent stories. The judges had a hard time picking the winners."

The winning essays follow:

"Thomas' Feathered Friend"

By Alexis Brown

It was winter. The snow covered the ground like a white blanket. Here in the forest, I was in my own world, with only my dog. I walked on, listening to the snow fall and the birds chirp and the wind whisper. Norman, my dog, ran ahead and I followed.

After a short distance he came to a stop. I looked down at my feet and there I found in the snow a chickadee. His wing was wounded. I picked him up and wrapped him in my scarf.

"Thomas! Supper!" cried a voice.

Ma was calling. I started on my way home. When I reached home I lay the bird on my bed and went to supper.

I didn't say anything about the bird until after supper when Dad was smoking his pipe and Ma was knitting. I asked if I could keep the bird until it was well and then let it go in the springtime.

Dad said it was one of my best ideas and Ma agreed. I don't think she liked my idea that much, but moms are moms.

"Close to the Sea"

By Mellie Gilder

Jo walked along humming slowly. It had seemed like summer would never come, but here it was, fresher and sweeter than she had ever imagined it. At last she could get outside and enjoy the beautiful island she lived on, hidden away from the all the world.

Jo loved the birds and brilliant flowers of the island, but most of all she loved the water, crystal clear and enchanting. And the fish and rocks and coral. All these things drew her closer and closer to the island, lost in a blue-green heaven.

Jo sat down on a rock and dangled her toe in the water. Then slipping on a scuba-diving suit she slid into the ocean.

When she got in the water she seemed to feel it flowing past her, bringing her into its very self, as if it were alive.

Jo slowly made her way toward the coral reef, looking with awe at all her shimmering surroundings.

Suddenly all about her was a terrible thrashing and foaming. Without thinking she dove downward. As she dove she saw a large gap in the coral. She dashed through and didn't slow her pace until she had crawled up the beach.

When Jo looked out to see the cause of her fright her face was immediately changed.

Out in the middle of the coral was a minky white calf. He had easily swum over the reef when the tide was high; now the tide had gone down and the calf was stuck in this coral pen.

Now the mother was trying to break the reef by bashing her majestic figure around its rough sides. Jo knew that in less than an hour she could



Cassandra Ward receives one of dozens of certificates given to students at the Lee Library summer reading program.

could be dead. A couple of days later the calf would die of starvation. How could she let this happen?

She couldn't go for help because by the time she got back it would be too late. She would have to do it herself.

Jo could see right away that trying to help the mother would be fruitless. Minkies are not the largest whales, but this one was large for a minky. Anyway, it would be hard to help a small one if it was thrashing about in the water.

No, it would not be easy, but she would have to help the calf get out of his pen of coral. It had occurred to her that the coral wasn't going to disappear just because she was helping him. She would have to find a hole in the coral.

Suddenly, she thought of the hole she had swum in through. It was quite large and she knew the calf would fit through.

Jo slid back in the water. Without hesitation she swam toward the calf who was trying desper-

ately to get out. She could see it was not going to be easy rounding up a whale.

Bubbles rose around Jo as she got closer to the calf. Suddenly, his tail swept past her, knocking her to the side. Jo got up next to his flank and nudged him. He shot forward and she followed as fast as she knew how.

He passed the hole and Jo pursued him. She turned him slowly and urged him back toward the hole. They were almost there when the calf dived straight down with Jo hanging on to his tail.

Bright colors whizzed by and then they were at the surface again. She began to herd him toward the hole. Finally he swam through.

Jo climbed onto the shore panting. She pulled off her mask and watched the sun shimmer on the whales' wet backs; then their tails rose as they went for a dive.

Jo sighed as she walked home. She knew that she would never be that close to a whale again, but she would always feel that close to the sea.

"Morning Comes"

By Nicole G. Brown

The warm yellow sun crept over the mountain, burning with majestic splendor. Creatures of the forest stirred, awakened by sunbeams drifting through the treetops. A melody of birdsong danced its way through the meadow and into the hearts of all who listened.

A shrill whinny of hunger broke the morning's magic. An impatient stallion paced his pasture. His chestnut coat was aflame with golden sunlight. Suddenly his ears pricked up. Someone was at the gate, breakfast had come.

...

Judy awoke to Ma's mealtime clatter. She yawned and wiggled her toes beneath the bedclothes. The pleasing aroma of buttermilk pancakes, coffee, toast, eggs and bacon flooded the room. Judy sniffed appreciatively, pushed off the blankets and rolled out of bed. Hurridly, she slipped into overalls and a plaid shirt. Sneakers were donned in an instant.

Quickly but quietly, she opened wide her window and crawled out to behold the fiery horizon of early morn. The girl raced through the barnyard to the mare's stall. Inside the barn, everything was still and silent. Expectation was in the air.

Judy slid open the stall door and gasped. By the mare lay a beautiful tiny colt. He was the very image of his sire — chestnut, defiant, proudly standing on his four spindly legs. The little one's fond mother watched him with eyes of adoration and love. He uttered a small but demanding cry. The colt turned toward his mother, found her milk, and sucked contentedly.

A stifled cough herded Judy back to reality. She looked up to see her parents smiling down at her. She grinned back happily.

"Red Gold," she said in a hushed voice. "I will call him Red Gold."

Lee school board to explore regionalization with 2 towns

By Gerald B. O'Connor

Berkshire Eagle Staff 8-21-91

LEE — Almost as if by surprise, the Lee School Committee last night decided to explore the possibility of joining with Lenox and Tyringham in a regional school compact.

The idea leapt from a debate over implementing the commonwealth's new and already controversial school-choice law that the committee, on a contentious 4-2 vote, decided to put into effect for the coming school year.

With the vote, Lee became the third South Berkshire school system to open its doors to potential out-of-town students, following Lenox and the three-town Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

"Our high school is too small," said Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski in the course of a peppery argument over school choice with School Committee-man Gary Norton. "I think — and it may happen after my time — that we have got to start looking to regionalize with Lenox and Tyringham."

Normally, the remark would have been chalked up as a wishful utterance. But committee member Carol LePrevost didn't let it die.

"Is there something we can do about regionalizing?" she asked, adding that it was something townspeople occasionally talked about, though never formally.

"I think it becomes germane for us to look at it," agreed Chairman Edward M. Lahey.

The upshot was that committee members agreed to read material on regionalization sent to Lahey by Denise Gould of Otis, who is chairman of a regional-school planning board covering Otis and Sandisfield. After they have digested that material, they plan to form a subcommittee to obtain additional information and also to confer with representatives of the state Department of Education as well as with residents of Lenox and Tyringham to determine if either or both of those towns would be receptive to the idea.

Because the proposal erupted so sud-

■ EXPLORE, from B1 8-21-91

denly, it came without benefit of consultation with anyone from either of the other towns. As a result, no one knew if people from Lenox or Tyringham were even amenable to the idea.

At the time, Zukowski was addressing a concern of Norton's that one of many ill-fated results of the school-choice law would be to generate such heated competition that schools would begin to specialize to attract students.

"I think it's a horrible idea," Norton said.

But it's the concept behind magnet schools, said Zukowski, who then cited size as a factor in determining the kind and number of academic courses schools can offer. Lee High School's enrollment is about 330.

Norton was joined by Lahey in opposing Zukowski's recommendation to implement the school-choice plan for a year. LePrevost, Judith L. Olds, Roland Besaw and David K. Chivers favored it.

Lahey, who was almost as vehemently opposed as Norton,

called it "asinine, the dumbest thing the Legislature ever did." It will cripple or destroy poorer school districts, he said.

Norton called it elitist and a "contradiction to the whole notion of community-based education." Referring to the one-year implementation in Lee, he said he "would not want to be in a position to tell a student he could not return after one year."

Chivers favored it almost as much as Norton and Lahey did not. He called it a "step in the right direction" and said because the best schools are often in the richer districts, parents unable to afford housing in those districts might now be able to send their children there.

Zukowski said he was unable last night to speculate how many students would come to Lee schools and how many local students might attend schools outside of Lee.

Lee establishes guidelines for students under choice law

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — If and when parents from other towns apply to Lee schools for admission of their children under the new school-choice law, they will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until classes are filled and then will be turned away.

This was one of the conditions voted by the School Committee Tuesday night after it decided to implement the choice law for the coming school year. The vote was 5-1, not 4-2 as reported in yesterday's Eagle. Chairman Edward M. Lahey, although critical of the law, voted with the majority, not against it.

Some grades are already at capacity, said Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski. They are preschool and kindergarten classes and Grades 1 and 7.

But otherwise, there are 11 spaces in Grade 2, seven in Grade 3, 12 in Grade 4, five in Grade 5, seven in Grade 6, six in Grade 8 and 15 each in Grades 9 through 12.

Lee school buses will pick up non-resident students at entrance points to the town, but parents or guardians of the incoming students will be responsible for transporting them "up to the geographic boundaries of Lee."

Full tuition costs

Finally, Zukowski was authorized to set tuitions to reflect the full cost of school attendance rather than the cost of instruction alone, which is what most school systems have been accustomed to charge.

Lee, which for a number of years has accepted students from Otis and Tyringham on a tuition basis, has set tuitions according to the customary instructional costs for many years, said Zukowski. These at the moment are \$1,550 for kindergarten, \$3,100 for Grades 1 through 8, and \$4,100 for high school.

Those tuitions will continue to be charged to Otis and Tyringham students, but others will be charged the full cost, which Zukowski said is \$3,383 for Grades 1 through 8 and \$5,552 for the high school grades.

Zukowski had told School Committee members he favored implementing the law. He also said that although it has flaws, he is confident they will be removed in the course of the coming year.

Committeeman Gary Norton was not convinced. The lone board member to vote against it, he said it has potential for great abuse. It is a law for the wealthy, he argued, and is also a law that can be expected to penalize poorer districts, which may give up more students than they receive.

Although he voted to open the schools to non-residents, Lahey condemned the law as thoughtless legislation, and he cited Holyoke as an example. A poor city, its school budget "has been destroyed, and now every parent who can take his kids out of there will," he said. Because school systems are required to pay the tuitions for their students who choose to attend other schools, he said, they stand to lose considerably more than they can gain

back from state reimbursements.

Using Lee for illustrative purposes, Lahey said if the town had to pay \$4,000 in tuition for a Lee resident enrolled in an out-of-town school district, it would lose the benefit of state aid for five other students as a result. That's because average per-pupil reimbursement from the commonwealth's Chapter 70 allocations in Lee is about \$860, not \$4,000.

Other business

In other action, the committee:
► Accepted with regret the resignation of longtime teacher John Siff, who is moving to Ohio. Siff, formerly an English teacher at Lee High School, has been the school's librarian for the past five years. He has been a member of the teaching staff for 23 years altogether.

The committee also accepted the resignation of assistant boys' soccer coach Brian Whitman.

► Voted to continue the cost of a reduced-price meal at 40 cents, while full-cost meals will be \$1.25. Zukowski said the committee must vote on the meal costs each year because of federal requirements.

School lunch costs are subsidized by the federal Department of Agriculture, which publishes income-eligibility guidelines each year.

► Was assured by Zukowski that transportation reimbursements for students in Grades 7 through 12, which the Legislature decided not to fund this year, will

not be kept out of this year's school budget. Their loss will be reflected in next year's budget, he said, but he predicted that between now and then "something will be done" to restore them.

"A lot of legislators, I think, will scratch their heads and wonder how this could have got by them without their knowledge," he said.

Lee Assessors begin updating assessments

LEE — Members of Lee's Board of Assessors have begun their triennial task of updating property assessments in town and can be expected to visit various households periodically over the next two months, Chairman William F. Derrick said.

He and his colleagues, Edward M. Briggs and Edward F. Murray, will be making the visits on Mondays between 1 and 4 p.m., he said.

The updating of assessments — to take into account additions and other changes in property — is required by the state Bureau of Local Assessment as part of a certification process necessary for fiscal 1993, the assessors said.

Lee Selectmen want to make some elected jobs appointive

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Selectmen are proposing that some of the town's elective officers become appointive under the special act that now authorizes the town to hire its first professional administrator.

When the measure was first approved by the town in 1989 as a proposal for the Legislature to enact, a number of the officers — Board of Assessors, Board of Health, constables, town clerk, treasurer, collector and accountant — who now are elected were to become appointive.

Wording was changed in the Legislature to restore them to elective status, a move that generated considerable anger among members of the then Board of Selectmen, but to no avail.

Now, the proposal to go back to the original wording has been greeted with signs of displeasure by some of the people who hold the positions at issue.

Hodgkins may comment

Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, whom the previous Board of Selectmen held to be largely responsible for changing those positions to elective ones in the existing act, was out of town yesterday, but the manager of his Lee office, Carol Marino, said he was aware of the changes and might comment on them when he returns.

In any event, the changes are contained in the draft of the warrant for the Sept. 26 special town meeting at which town meeting representatives will be asked finally to approve a fiscal 1992 town budget as well as the changes in the act allowing Lee to establish a se-

Labor Day holiday, will be Sept. 4, a Wednesday.

There are some wording changes still to be made, said Selectman Joseph F. DuPont.

In all, the warrant contains 15 articles, 13 of them dealing with the budget, one with the act authorizing the selectmen-administrator form of government and one with the legislative act authorizing school systems to defer the final teacher-salary payments to the next fiscal year.

The Selectmen are proposing that the town meeting reject the payment deferral, designed to help financially strapped towns overcome the severe cutbacks in state aid this year.

Carlino said yesterday the Finance Committee, which proposed most of the budget alterations, was against the deferral as well. Although it might help the town this year, it would have to be paid back, possibly at a time when fiscal straits are even narrower.

The act creating the selectmen-administrator form of government

Lee Library gets state energy grant

LEE — The Lee Library Association has been awarded a state energy grant of \$8,538 through the Non-profit Energy Efficiency Program.

Financed by oil overcharge funds, not state tax dollars, the program provides technical and financial assistance to non-profit organizations to improve the energy efficiency of their facilities.

The Lee Library Association plans to use the grant to install energy conservation measures in the local library at 100 Main St. The funds will pay for a portion of its \$12,077 energy improvement project.

lectmen-administrator form of government. If the town meeting approves the change, the measure will have to go back to the Legislature for its OK.

One of the articles dealing with budget also affects the administrator because it would halve the salary for the job, from \$45,000 to \$22,500. If this is approved, the Selectmen would know they could hire the town's first administrator for at least a half a year.

The budget at present is out of balance by \$255,000 because of the resounding rejection by voters at the annual town election May 13 of a proposed \$255,000 override of tax-limiting Proposition 2½.

The new budget removes the need for the override through reductions in a number of accounts; the shifting of some revenue sources from direct property-tax appropriations to a combination of transfers, borrowing and use of available funds; and the dissolving of an insurance trust fund that at last count contained a little more than \$200,000.

To study document

If the last is approved, it would enable the town to petition the Legislature to repeal the act establishing the fund and permit the transfer of the fund's money into the town treasury.

The Selectmen, who received copies of the warrant draft last night from Town Clerk Patricia D. Carlino, said they will study it during the week and then approve it for publication at their next meeting, which, because of the coming

was approved by electors May 13.

If the coming town meeting approves the wording changes, which would also permit the Selectmen to waive the formal education requirements for an administrator, the act would have to pass muster with many of the same people who passed on it a year ago, including Hodgkins. He is House chairman of the Committee on Local Affairs.

"We felt it ought to go back to the wording passed by the town originally," said Selectman Martin H. Deely.

Chairman Diane P. Roosa said the administrator form of government would be spelled out at a special meeting Thursday at 7:30 at the Senior Center on Railroad Street. Speakers will be a town manager, Steven L. Ledoux, and a selectman, J. O'Brien Locke, both of Williamstown, and an attorney, Sarah H. Bell of Lenox, who headed her town's committee last fall and winter that won passage in May of town manager legislation for Lenox.

There will be plenty of time for questions, Roosa said.

Eagle 8-29-91

New England firemen's muster slated Sunday

LEE — The Volunteer Fire Company will be host to the first New England firefighters muster to be held in Berkshire County in more than five years. It will be Sunday at the Lee Athletic Field on Housatonic Street.

More than 15 teams representing fire companies from Western Massachusetts, Columbia County in New York, northern Connecticut and southern Vermont will participate in the Lee Firefighters Muster. The six- and eight-member teams will show their expertise in firefighting techniques in competitive events.

The competition will be between 1 and 6. However, the field will be open from noon to 8. Admission is free.

A motorcade of the teams as well as a long line of antique firefighting apparatus will begin at the firehouse on Main Street at 12:30 and make its way to the athletic field.

The Lee company will sell concessions. Beer and wine will be served on the premises only. No alcoholic beverages or coolers will be allowed through the gates.

The Western Massachusetts teams participating will include: Lee, Great Barrington, Hous-

atonic, Lenox, Lenox Dale, Lanesboro, Hinsdale, Dalton, Otis, South Deerfield, Greenfield, Whately, Hatfield and Pittsfield. The New York companies include Stephentown and Berlin, and from Vermont, Bennington and Arlington.

The competitions, in which each team participates individually and is timed to produce an overall standing, are divided into two categories: field and motorized events.

The field events include the day hose competition and the midnight alarm. In the day hose event, teams are required to connect three sections of hose and hook them to a fake hydrant at one end and nozzle at the other. The team must drag the entire apparatus across the finish line.

During the midnight alarm, when alarm sounds, members of the team rush to a central pile of equipment and grab whatever is

available. As soon as they are dressed, they have to connect a series of hoses, hook them up to a live hydrant and pump the water until they trip a target.

The motorized events include pumping and extinguishing, each using a fire truck. In the pumping event, the teams ride the length of a field and pump the water from the truck until they trip a target. In the final motorized event, the teams must extinguish an oil fire.



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

The historic Golden Hill Road bridge will be preserved if a Lee study group has its way.

Committee calls for restoration of Lee's Golden Hill Road bridge

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 8-28-91

LEE — A special committee deciding what to do about the historic steel pony truss bridge on Golden Hill Road says its "heart-felt choice" is to repair the bridge and strengthen it so that it can support at least a 10-ton load.

If restoration is not feasible, the committee says it would endorse a "footprint substitute" of similar design. By this they mean a bridge that would fit as closely as possible into the space, or "footprint," occupied by the present 106-year-old structure.

But the replacement "should be as close as possible in appearance to the existing bridge, with a slight skew and a moderate increase in width," the committee says in a written progress report endorsed by the Selectmen on Monday night.

By "slight skew" the group means a slight change in the angle of crossing so that the road is straighter than at present.

Sent to Dindio

The Selectmen forwarded the choices by letter to Ross B. Dindio, District 1 highway engineer for the state Department of Public Works, which would supervise and pay for the job. No cost estimates have been made.

The bridge committee, with representatives from the Selectmen, Public Works and Planning boards; Traffic, Conservation and Historical commissions; Ambulance Service Committee and Fire Department, as well as from among bridge neighbors, has been meeting since July 17.

Preservation preferred

Besides agreeing on first- and second-choice solutions, its members have reached consensus that preliminary layouts prepared by the state DPW are "not satisfactory" and that an engineering study should be undertaken to

determine if the first choice — preserving the historic bridge itself and increasing its load-bearing capability — is feasible.

Committee members want to know if the town would be reimbursed by the state if it undertakes such a study itself or, alternatively, if the DPW engineering staff could undertake it.

In any event, "there appears to be general agreement among the committee membership that Golden Hill Road should remain open and that a functional bridge is necessary," the Selectmen's letter says. It is signed by Chairwoman Diane P. Roosa.

Not all agree

Members observe that keeping the road open is not a goal shared by all residents of the area. The bridge, built in 1885, spans the Housatonic River in the marshy wetlands north of town that border the road to Lenox Dale. Some residents believe a new or refurbished bridge would bring about increased traffic and development, which they don't want.

At any rate, says Roosa in the conclusion to her letter to Dindio, "the entire town is waiting to hear the ultimate decision."

'Servants of the towns'

Late in May, Dindio and the district's projects engineer, Edwin S. Taginski, told Lee officials that the state, under present policy, is the servant of the towns. If, in the case of the Golden Hill Road bridge, the town's request is practicable, the state will do its best to conform to it, he said.

The ado about the bridge comes because it has been weakened over the years by flood damage and age and needs to be replaced or removed. Lee Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo in 1986 asked the state to build a new one.

Based on preliminary layouts,

the state's early suggestion was to build either a new bridge on the site of the present one or a longer bridge just downstream. The first choice would be less expensive than the second, the DPW officials said, but the second one would have the effect of straightening the road and starting a more gradual incline up Golden Hill to the west.

In either case, the bridge would be of prestressed concrete and would be two lanes wide. The existing bridge has only one lane.

By Christine Burns

Record 8-30-91

LEE — Usually volunteer firemen race against time to save lives and to prevent property damage. The job is dangerously noble and desperately needed — but not necessarily fun.

This Sunday, September 1, over fifteen local fire companies will erase the danger element and increase the fun factor of fire fighting as they race against a stop watch, and each other, in the 1991 Lee Fireman's Muster at the Lee Athletic Field on Housatonic Street.

This muster has nothing to do with hot dogs, except for the fact that they'll be sold at the concession booths by the members of the Lee Fire Company that aren't participating in the competitive events.

Rather this type of muster, which is the first one to be held in Berkshire County for over five years, centers on competitive events that entail mastery of the basic skills of fire fighting.

It's not a game, it's an adventure.

The competitions fall into two types of categories, field and motorized events. Each team participates in each event separately while being timed in order to figure into an overall standing.

The dry hose competition is just that. The six or eight member teams are required to connect three sections of hose and then hook the united hose up to a fake fire hydrant. The teams must then drag the entire apparatus across the finish line.

The Midnight Alarm is the most famous of all events. Just as if they were roused from a deep sleep to battle a blazing fire in the middle of the night, the members of the muster teams have to rush, half-dressed, to a center pile of haphazard equipment. Once to the pile, it's anything goes as they scramble to put on whatever fits and make their way to a series of hoses which lay waiting to be connected.

This time the not-so-fashionably attired fire fighters must hook the hoses up to a live hydrant and hand pump water until they trip the appropriate target.

Hinsdale, Dalton, Otis, South Deerfield, Greenfield, Whatley, Hatfield and Pittsfield. The New York companies include Verdooy from Latham, Stephentown, Berlin and Thomas Corners.

The Bennington and Arlington squads will represent Vermont while Keene will represent New Hampshire and Connecticut will field teams from Bissellville and Yantic.

The events will be held between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. and the fields open from noon to 8 p.m. Admission to the muster competition is free.

A motorcade featuring the teams as well as a long line of antique fire fighting apparatus will begin at the Lee fire House on Main Street at 12:30 and will make its way to the athletic field for the competition.

The Lee Fire Company will be selling concessions. Beer and wine will be served on the premises only. No alcoholic beverages or coolers will be allowed through the gates.

In the event of rain, just remember that a little mud never hurt anybody.

The details about the final event, designed by the captains of the Lee squad in a less than serious manner than the competitive events, have yet to be released.

The Western Massachusetts teams participating in the event include Lee, Great Barrington, Housatonic, Lenox, Lenoxdale, Lanesboro,

The motorized events involve a fire-fighting vehicle — not necessarily a vehicle that's loaded with the state of the art equipment — but at least one that runs.

In the pumping event, the squads assemble themselves a lengthy distance away from the fire truck. The horn sounds, the clock starts and they're off. Once they reach the truck, they must hang on for dear life as the vehicle races the length of the field to a water tank. The team pumps the water from the tank through a hose until they trip the target.

The last competitive event starts like the first motorized competition but instead of tripping a target, the team must extinguish an oil fire contained in a tank.

The Western Massachusetts teams participating in the event include Lee, Great Barrington, Housatonic, Lenox, Lenoxdale, Lanesboro,

Lee, its landfill filling up, looking at Vicon solution

By Gerald B. O'Connor

Berkshire Eagle Staff 8-31-91

LEE — The Board of Health is ready to order the closing of Lee's landfill on Woodland Road by next June 30 and endorse a plan to dispose of household rubbish at the Vicon Recovery Associates incinerator in Pittsfield, Board of Health Chairman Dr. Charles W. Stratton said Thursday.

LEE, from B1

be a multimillion-dollar investment in a new landfill.

The cost of disposal will rise, Scolforo said, but it will rise anyway, with or without a Vicon agreement.

Board of Health involvement is necessary, said Scully, because the board has statutory responsibility for the landfill, even though the Department of Public Works operates it.

Scully said the Selectmen have to pass on the Vicon plan because they are the town's executive body and should sign the actual agreement. To tie it all together, the three boards are tentatively scheduled to meet together Sept. 23, Stratton said, although this date could change.

\$750,000 for capping

While details still must be worked out, Scolforo and Vicon manager Clark are talking about moving the first Lee rubbish to Vicon during the coming winter.

A certain volume of it, however, will be needed to fill cavities at the landfill so the landfill can be

The endorsement is a necessary step in the impending agreement with Vicon, according to Town Counsel Jerome J. Scully. Scully was asked by the Selectmen for an opinion on the matter after Lee's Board of Public Works on Aug. 5 approved a proposal to enter an agreement with Vicon.

Vicon manager Llewelyn E. Clark said Lee would be the eighth town outside of Pittsfield

graded and covered in accordance with state regulations, Scolforo said. The capping cost has been estimated by engineers from the Tighe & Bond consulting firm at approximately \$750,000.

Department of Environmental Protection regulations require that towns submit engineering plans to show how landfills will be closed and capped so they shed rain and don't contaminate ground water.

They also require that landfills operated after next June 30 be relicensed — which could cost \$10,000 — and that any landfill operated after Dec. 31, 1993, have an impervious liner in its bottom, a compacted layer of clay underneath it and a collection system to draw off leachate for disposal through a wastewater treatment system.

The capital cost of a lined landfill for Lee was estimated a year ago at \$10 million. This is the cost Scolforo and other town officials are seeking to avoid or at least defer.

They do not want to avoid or

to sign a memorandum of understanding with Vicon for trash disposal.

Avoid big investment

Lee's landfill is running out of room, says Department of Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo, and rubbish disposal at Vicon would enable the town to avoid what engineers say would

LEE, continued on B4

defer the purchase of additional acreage next to the landfill, however. Scolforo said the added space is needed for a number of reasons.

Site for recycling

One is to provide a recycling site. Another is to establish a composting center because under the DEP regulations that call for environmentally protective landfills there are regulations forbidding burial of leaves, yard waste and similar organic material in landfills, requiring instead that these be composted.

The annual town meeting in 1990 authorized borrowing \$710,000 as the town's share in a \$1.06 million acquisition of 27 additional acres next to the present landfill. The other share would be paid by Mead Corp. whose Specialty Papers Division in South Lee needs landfill space to deposit paper sludge.

Scolforo said this week that the town and Mead have proposed the purchase from Lane Construction Co., whose land abuts the landfill.

Hodgkins comes out against 'shortening' the ballot in Lee

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, joined a cluster of town officials Thursday night in opposing converting some of the town's elected offices into appointed ones — what he called "shortening the ballot" — under the special act permitting the town to hire its first professional administrator.

"I don't agree with shortening the ballot," he said at a meeting called by Selectmen to provide information on the selectmen-administrator form of government that will be part of the warrant for a special town meeting Sept. 26.

Besides voting on a final town budget for the fiscal year that began July 1, the town meeting will consider amending the special act so that the town clerk, town treasurer, town collector and members of the boards of health and assessors would become appointive.

Administrative power

Under the act as approved by voters in the town election May 13, those positions are elective, as they have been in the past.

"If you don't like what they're doing, you can go into the privacy of the voting booth and throw the rascals out," said Hodgkins.

But speakers invited to the meeting to outline duties and responsibilities of full-time administrators suggested that with too many elected officials on hand, the role of an administrator could be diluted to such a point that whoever was hired for the job would be ineffective.

"It's difficult for someone to be responsible if there are people out there he can't control," said Sarah H. Bell of Lenox, an attorney who headed a committee last year to draft town manager legislation for her town. That legislation was overwhelmingly approved by Lenox voters last May and then was approved by the Legislature and signed into law 2½ months later.

Most of the positions that remain elective under Lee's special act are appointive in the Lenox version.

It's not mandatory that towns

With too many elected officials, the role of administrator could be diluted.

turn various elective offices into appointive ones, said Williamstown Selectmen Chairman J. O'Brien Locke, but elected officials "tend to have constituencies of their own," and conflicts and standoffs can result.

Locke, Bell and Williamstown Town Manager Steven L. Ledoux were the invited speakers, and they answered questions from an audience of 30 for nearly an hour. The majority of the audience appeared to favor the administrator concept but were more mixed in their views on whether to retain all the elective posts.

Ledoux, who said the Williamstown manager's post is "one of the strongest in Massachusetts" because it gives the manager hiring and firing power over all appointive employees, said the practical side of the issue is that most professional administrators "know the town's employees are its most valuable asset" and that he would not expect any incoming administrator "to make many changes at all."

"I would hate to lose a Jan Smith [town collector Janice G. Smith] or a Patty Carlino [town clerk and treasurer Patricia D. Carlino]," said assessor Edward M. Briggs. Both posts are elective now.

"Why would you lose them?" asked Selectman Martin H. Deely.

The special act that was approved in May calls for the election of the Selectmen, town meeting members, moderator, School Committee, Housing Authority, Planning Board, Community Development Corp., Board of Health and constables, as well as the officers listed earlier.

The reason for the amendment, said Deely, is that the group of offices at issue was appointive under the proposal initially drawn up by David A. Booth in 1988. Booth, a professor at the

University of Massachusetts, was hired by Lee to conduct the government study that recommended the administrator form of government.

The changes were made in the Legislature — Hodgkins was blamed by previous Selectmen for holding up the act so the changes could be made — and the present Selectmen are proposing that the act as endorsed by the annual town meeting in 1989 be restored.

Hodgkins defended his legislative role Thursday night, saying that what the 1989 town meeting approved was a short article that summarized the proposal but did not spell out details. When it got to the Legislature, he contended, the Local Affairs Committee, of which he is House chairman, "had concerns about shortening the ballot without the community voting to do so."

Now, he said, he will "wholeheartedly stand by whatever the town decides."

Education requirement

There was also debate over an addition to the act that would allow the Selectmen by unanimous vote to waive the formal education requirements for the administrator's post and substitute 10 years' experience in a "supervisory administrative capacity."

The present act calls for a bachelor's degree and five years' experience or a master's degree and three years'.

"I think it's poor judgment to waive [the present requirements]," said former Selectman Joseph J. Castronova. "I would hope the educational requirements would be put back in."

"We wanted to open it as much as possible to someone in the local community," explained Deely.

"I can't see where you would want to take away the education credits," said Aldo V. Pascucci, a member of the Planning Board. "The town deserves the best."

But August Passetto, who commented on the administrator issue several times during the evening in a booming voice, told listeners that "what you need is a town manager with common sense and not a lot of baloney."



Photo by Lisa Bowers

Lee 55th reunion

Lee High School class of 1936 held its 55th reunion at Cork 'N Hearth restaurant Aug. 21. Seated are Lena Arioli Pavoni, Mary Arioli Ordyna, Evelyn Farnum McClelland and Franklyn Sturgis; first row, Ernest Lowry, Helen Dupont Sparks, Florence Abderhalden Burt, Frances Faxon Carty, Alice Burt Morin, Betty Spofford Zanetti and Edwin Grady; second row, Alfred Turner, Flora Frulla Arment and Mary Herlihy King; third row, Joseph Barbini, Elmer Forrest, William O'Brien, Frank Carrington and Gerald Morin.

Small Cities Grants

\$850,000 in Allotments Approved for 11 Towns

WEST STOCKBRIDGE — At the final public hearing on the latest round of a Small Cities Grants application, the Selectmen unanimously approved allotments for an \$850,000, 11-town service package.

Upon the recommendation of Peter J. Lafayette, president of Berkshire Housing Development Corp., of Pittsfield, the social service portion of what is mainly a housing rehab proposal was increased from 15 percent of the total to 20 percent.

"Nonprofit agencies are being urged to apply for these funds by the state government," he told the board, "because state funding has significantly decreased in the last year."

The corporation last year wrote and submitted a similar proposal that included six South County communities, with West Stockbridge as the lead town. As such, the town holds public hearings, oversees the application process, and chooses an administering organization

once the grants are awarded.

Of the 60 to 70 applications submitted for federal Housing and Urban Development grants that are administered by the state, Lafayette said, only about half will be accepted.

The ten other towns that have agreed to be part of this season's application are Becket, Washington, Sandisfield, Otis, Lee, Great Barrington, Lenox, Sheffield, New Marlboro, and Stockbridge.

The housing portion of the grant, \$643,613, covers low-interest housing rehabilitation loans for low- and moderate-income homeowners, mediation services between renters and landlords, and loans to landlords. Between 46 and 40 units are expected to be up-graded.

Under this section, the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority has applied for \$21,375 for tenant-landlord mediations.

In the social service sector, totaling \$169,238, the following have been included: Elder Services, \$73,496; Children's Health

Program, \$32,167; Good Samaritan Home Ownership Program, \$8,500; Hospice of the Berkshires, \$19,000; Redfield

House, \$14,250.

According to Lafayette, the final application will be sent out next week.

Lee Plans Meetings For Money

By Emily DeVoti

LEE — The Board of Selectmen has announced that money day is soon approaching.

They have scheduled two special town meetings for September 26 at 7:30 and 7:45 to vote in adjustments to the respective town budgets for the 1991 and 1992 fiscal years.

The first vote is a simple three article vote to approve the transference of funds from the available funds in the Treasury into the Unemployment Insurance Account, Selectmen's Expense Account, and the Sealer of Weights and Measures Fees Account, all for FY91.

The second vote may take a little more time.

Included among the 15 articles are the newly proposed balanced budget for FY92, an amendment to the current Acts of 1991 stating the organization of a selectman-administrator form of government, and the change-over of specific town positions from elected to appointed status.

The budget is in the form presented to the Selectmen two weeks ago by the Finance Committee. It is finally balanced to meet the tax cap, without a proposition 2 and 1/2 over-ride, at \$4.86 million, with \$900 to spare. An actual \$239,000 in cuts have been made since the original budget was voted down in May.

The installation of the position of town administrator was delayed in early budget negotiations. It was decided not to provide funds for the post until mid-way through the fiscal year.

However, as of January 1, 1992, the funding will be available, and right now the Selectmen are tailoring the position to the town's needs.

The September vote will include the approval of the town's efforts to petition the General Court to amend the previously mentioned Acts of 1991.

Selectman Martin Deely said that the intent of the amendment is to give the town administrator a greater fiscal control, a position which was originally approved by the town only to be changed in ensuing legislation in Boston.

The position would provide for a fiscal organizer in charge of a financial team of appointed officials who are currently elected—including the Board of Assessors, town clerk, treasurer, and tax collector.

The selectmen hope that such a position would provide a tighter team to work with the Finance Committee in budget negotiations for FY93.

Help for Mass. farmers not coming from state

To the Editor of THE EAGLE: — 7-1-91

My first impression of the so-called cow billboard wasn't the plight of local dairy farmers, but what a waste of money [Eagle, July 30]. I feel the sooner farmers realize state and federal officials could care less, the faster their road to recovery. I do not include Extension Service personnel in that category, as they provide lots of help to the local farmer.

How about local farmers forming their own co-op and marketing a locally produced product to their neighbors? The idle processing plants could be used making quality milk, cream, cheese and ice-cream products. Also, maybe offering home delivery in the evening when more people are at home.

I know all of these ideas require tremendous amounts of work and money, but at least you will be working with people in the same boat, and your future will be in your own hands.

GARY O'BRIEN

Summer Street
Lee

Energy grants given to school and library

LEE — State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, and Commissioner of Energy Resources Paul Gromer have announced that the DeSisto School in Stockbridge and the Lenox Library Association have been awarded state energy grants through the Commonwealth's Non-profit Energy Efficiency Program.

The Desisto School was awarded \$4,260 and the Lenox Library was awarded \$3,759. Both organizations will use the grants to install energy conservation measures at their facilities.

Funded through oil overcharge funds, the program provides technical and financial assistance to help non-profit organizations improve the energy efficiency of their facilities. It is administered statewide by the Conservation Services Group Inc., of Boston.

The Center for Ecological Technology is the local program operator for Berkshire County.

Housing Authority in Lee dedicates \$1.2 million project

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Lee Housing Authority dedicated a new housing project for low-income families on Marble Street Thursday morning, marking the start of a one-year construction period and an end to a period of strife during which the project at one time appeared doomed.

Members of various town boards, including the Housing Authority, were on hand along with state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, and state Sen. Jane M. Swift, R-North Adams, to hear Housing Authority member Franklyn Sturgis name the project Clarke Court, in memory of a Lee businessman he had known.

William A. Clarke, who died in 1976 at the age of 81, had owned the property where the housing units will be built, north of the Massachusetts Turnpike service area. Forty-eight units of housing for the elderly, called Brown Court, and an eight-unit facility for the mentally handicapped, called Budd House and operated by the state Department of Mental Retardation, are on other parts of the 23-acre property closer to town.

Foundations have already been poured for what will eventually be eight buildings with 16 two- and three-bedroom apartments making up Clarke Court.

Outgoing Housing Authority Chairman Francis J. Foley said the project will offer "housing for families looking for decent housing but who can't afford the rentals that are common in this area."

While renters will be "mostly low-income families," he said, "it doesn't mean they'll be there forever. It will be for the time until they can afford to buy their own homes."

Two of the units will be outfitted for physically handicapped occupants.

Kathleen Byrnes, executive director of the Berkshire County

Regional Housing Authority, which is consultant to the Housing Authority in Lee, will act as contract officer for the \$1.2 million project.

Mello Construction Inc. of Taunton is the general contractor. Dietz & Co. of Springfield is the architectural firm. The project will take about a year to complete, Byrnes said.

She said Foley deserves the lion's share of credit for bringing the project to its present stage in the face of strong opposition from neighbors and other town boards.

The Zoning Board of Appeals in 1988 had turned down a request for a comprehensive construction permit, citing among other things a townwide moratorium on developments that would further tax the town's already strained sewage-treatment system.

Subsequently, the state Housing Appeals Committee overturned the ruling, which was promptly challenged by the then-Board of Selectmen through an appeal to Superior Court.

The court in June 1990 ruled that the town's need for affordable housing outweighed the moratorium and that the permit was valid.

Meanwhile, Marble Street residents objected to the project, citing drainage problems and the change from original plans to erect housing for the elderly there.

The former director of the regional housing authority, Daniel E. Tuchscherer, argued at the time that while there are 300 units of housing for the elderly in South Berkshire County, there were no affordable units. He said there was a long waiting list.

Foley, who has been succeeded as chairman of the Lee authority by Rita S. Perry, said there is already a waiting list for the Clarke Court units.

Drainage to correct the problem cited by abutters on Marble Street will be covered by funds from a \$168,000 state grant, Byrnes said.

Garrity gets permit for apartment house

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 9-7-91

LEE — The Selectmen Wednesday night approved — for the second time in three months — a special permit for builder Thomas R. Garrity of Devon Road so that he can erect a six-unit apartment house on land he and his wife, Barbara, own at 1 West Park St.

Actual construction won't begin until the end of the month, when the standard 21-day appeal period expires, Garrity said yesterday. But when it does, he will be able to hire back several of the nine workers he had to lay off a month ago when the project hit the most recent of several snags.

The Garritys already own a 15-unit apartment complex at the site.

The new one will have significance because it will be the first privately constructed multifamily dwelling in town since imposition of a moratorium on apartment construction four years ago. The moratorium was aimed at preventing addition of units that together would add 2,000 gallons or more of effluent daily to the town's overtaxed sewage-treatment system.

A publicly funded, 16-unit housing project for low-income families on Marble Street was just begun in July.

Zoning waiver

Garrity had won his first special permit June 3 when the Selectmen also agreed to waive a zoning-by-law requirement that each apartment have an accompanying 5,000 square feet of land. But the Selectmen later had to rescind the permit when Town Counsel Jerome J. Scully said it

was beyond the board's authority to grant the waiver, which is the purview of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Garrity finally obtained the waiver from the ZBA but then found that he had to go through the special-permit process again, which required the publication of legal notices and the wait for a new hearing.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa said Wednesday night that because there had been no opposition to the project the first time around, she had viewed the recording of the waiver, in effect, as the final requirement.

But Selectman Joseph F. Dupont argued that it was necessary to adhere to the zoning bylaw rather than shortcut it.

Garrity had blamed Dupont primarily for holding up the project because of personal animosity, which Dupont denied.

Warrant finalized

In other action Wednesday, the Selectmen completed the warrant for the special town meeting Sept. 26, making one change to the wording of the article dealing with legislation creating the town's first selectmen-administrator form of government.

The change specifies that the 10 years of experience that will be accepted in place of educational credits for an administrator must be "municipal" administrative experience, not merely "supervisory" administrative experience.

The Selectmen's secretary, Pauline Pollard, who is a Lee constable, will post copies of the warrant in the next few days at the post offices in Lee and South Lee and in the town clerk's office in Town Hall.

Henry G. Greiner, 57; longtime Lee official

LEE — Henry G. Greiner, 57, of Sturgis Avenue died Sunday at Berkshire Medical Center shortly after having suffered an apparent heart attack at home. He was a member of the School Committee from March 1972 to May 1987 and its chairman for nine years.

Mr. Greiner was vice president of the Berkshire County chapter of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and a former member and chairman of the Finance Committee.

Born in New York City on Oct. 9, 1933, son of Herbert and Elizabeth Klett Greiner, he was educated in New York schools. He moved to Lee in 1960.

He served in the Army during the 1950s.

Mr. Greiner was employed as a service representative for International Business Machines in New York and later Pittsfield, before becoming a field representative for the Massachusetts Association of School Committees

for Western Massachusetts in 1977.

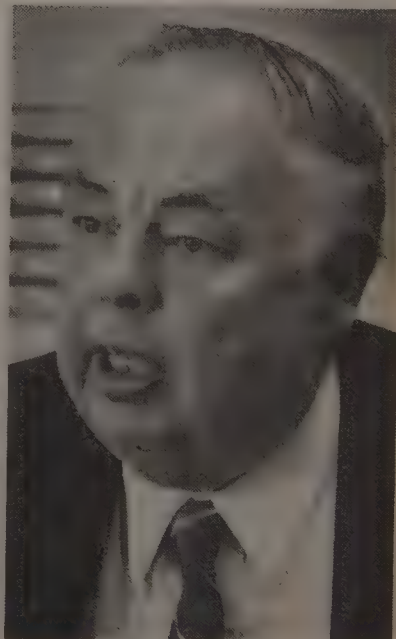
He was a member of Greenock Country Club, a former member and past president of the Lee Kiwanis Club, a former Little League coach, a PeeWee Football League coach and member of its board of directors, and a volunteer who took movies of Lee High School football games for 10 years.

He and his wife, the former Virginia L. Myster, would have celebrated their 33rd wedding anniversary on Oct. 4.

Besides his wife, he leaves two sons, Matthew H. and David J. Greiner, both of Pittsfield; a daughter, Mrs. Janice E. Haywood of Vernon, Conn.; a brother, Herbert W. Greiner of Flanders, N.J., and five grandchildren.

The funeral will be tomorrow at 10 at Kelly Funeral Home. Burial will be in Fairmount Cemetery.

Calling hours at the funeral home will be today from 2 to 4



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff
Henry G. Greiner

and 7 to 9.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Henry G. Greiner scholarship fund in care of Superintendent of Schools, Union 29, Crossway, Lee, 01238.

CTSB ready to start south county TV station

After months of preparation, it's lights, camera, action for Community Television of Southern Berkshire.

With high ambitions to create an almost continuous community television station for the Century Cable viewership, CTSB has bought \$20,000 worth of equipment that may be used by area residents to produce local programs.

Paul Kakley of Stockbridge filmed the inaugural CTSB program Monday of the Monument Mountain Regional High School boys' and girls' night soccer games. The games also marked the school's first night event at the school since lights were installed over the summer.

"We're running along very smoothly," says Bruce Kaiden, co-chairman of programming. "The possibilities are very exciting."

The emergence of CTSB has prompted discussions among Berkshire cable television workers of a county television network that could transmit local programs throughout the county simultaneously, says Garrett McCarey, executive director of Pittsfield Community Television.

"We'd like to connect the county's three main cable systems (Century in south county, Warner in Pittsfield and Adelpia in north county) through microwave satellites," McCarey says. "Eventually, the way I see it, it could be tied together through an educational network. I could see a class at Berkshire Community College or North Adams State College being done on a countywide basis."

In Pittsfield on Monday, the station helped arrange the first interactive television class with a teacher in German instructing a class in Taconic High School that also involved students at Pittsfield High School. In south county, educators have discussed the possibilities of interactive television to link students in the rural schools but the idea has never gotten off the ground.

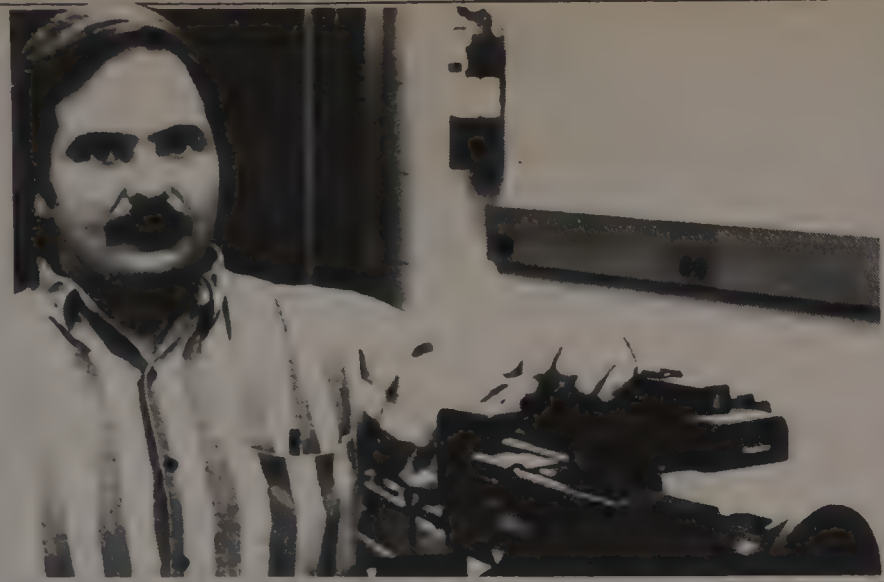
With the start of CTSB, however, discussions have been renewed in south county.

CTSB facilitates public access television on Channel 11 on Century Berkshire Cable Television. Century serves more than 7,500 households in Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and Great Barrington.

Public access channel is an open station that is available to the community to broadcast films, events or programs free of charge. All cable stations are required to carry a public access channel. Pittsfield Community Television has become very active in the last few years with public access television, and Adelpia in north county has had a full slate of evening broadcasts on its public access station for many years.

Up until recently, Century's Channel 11 has been rarely used for anything beyond the bulletin board which lists events. This spring, however, Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski arranged for several broadcasts of Lee events using equipment from the school system.

CTSB was formed about a year ago as a non-profit group to promote community television. Last December, the group showed a series of local programs for eight days to try to spur interest in the station. The group's efforts, however, were stalled when some towns were reluctant to release \$5,000 each for CTSB. As part of the towns' contract with Century Berkshire



Paul Kakley of Stockbridge is one of several people that CTSB hopes will become active in the new south county television station.

Cable, the company gave each town \$5,000 to be used for the public access station. That money was never used, and some people such as Zukowski questioned whether CTSB was the proper agency to spend the money.

By this summer, however, selectmen in all four towns handed the money over to CTSB. The non-profit group has bought a television camera and other equipment and is ready to roll.

Kaiden says a schedule of potential programs has been put together although CTSB is looking for residents to step forward to produce and arrange some shows.

"Programming is primarily generated through the community," Kaiden says. "We're the executive producers and we're looking for producers."

CTSB will help train people to use the equipment, schedule times and dates for the broadcasts, and in some instances will do the video work themselves for different programs.

Kaiden and Herbert Wolff of Great Barrington have put together a possible schedule for CTSB that includes programming for the elderly, interviews with Berkshire newsmakers, news events from the cable company's four towns, a food show, reli-

gious programming, Berkshire cultural events such as L'Orchestra and art shows, and an educational program that the schools can use.

"This is a schedule of what could happen seven days a week," Kaiden says. "We're looking for people who we can help do the programs. It is all very flexible."

One show that has been broadcast on a regular basis in the past is Berkshire Box Office, a talk show about movies that was done by students at DeSisto School in Stockbridge. Kaiden, however, says that it is unclear whether that show will continue.

The SOUTH ADVOCATE/ADVOCATE newsmagazines plan to sponsor a candidates forum for the upcoming election for two Lenox selectmen's seats in October.

Although plans have not been finalized, Kaiden says CTSB is on the verge of getting a transmission site near Monument Mountain. With the facility, he says, CTSB may be able to do dual transmissions.

Kakley says that he foresees Monument Mountain Regional High School serving as a center for educational programs as well, and also as a source for satellite programming.

How much CTSB will be able to do will depend on how much money it can get through fund raising and from Century Cable. The cable company's contract with the four towns ends next year and cable negotiators say they are placing a high priority on Century Cable in improving its commitment to public access television.

"We're going to try to get more funding in the next contract," Kakley says. "What we got before was just ridiculous."

Will 65 cost lives?

Despite concerns that the state Senate's vote last week to hike the speed limit on the Massachusetts Turnpike to 65 miles per hour on portions of the highway, Lee Ambulance Service Director Kenneth LaBier says he does not foresee an increase in motor vehicle accidents and injuries.

Lee Ambulance serves a portion of the turnpike in Lee and some neighboring towns and routinely responds to accidents on the roadway.

"In all honesty I'm not opposed to 65 miles per hour," LaBier says. "I have never noticed any increase or decrease with the difference between speed limits. I will say that if they're going to make it 65, they should make it 65 and enforce it. Right now, maybe 1 percent of the cars go 55 miles per hour."

LaBier adds that most of the accidents he has observed occur with drivers who go well above not only 55 mph but also 65 mph.

"Usually the accidents we have are with people who are going at excessive speeds and they're well above 65, so I don't think the speed limit will make much of a difference with them," he says.

Hodgkins: To pay or not to pay?

Saying it is better to help a state representative work with the town and residents than to try to reap a profit off him, the Lee selectmen decided this week not to charge state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, rent for office space.

Hodgkins moved his Berkshire office into the town-owned Airoidi Building earlier this summer. The town was not charging any rent for the hometown state representative who is one of the few Berkshire legislators to run a full-time office in the Berkshires. However, some residents and Selectman Joseph F. DuPont suggested that Hodgkins should pay rent to the town.

With strong encouragement from residents Gus Passetto and Joseph Castronova, DuPont recommended Monday the town charge Hodgkins \$122.50 a month for his office which would pay for the costs of maintaining the one-room space on a square footage basis. But DuPont's fellow board members disagreed.

"We're all in the same government," Selectman Martin Deely said. "I see no reason to charge him anything."

Deely added that the town benefits by giving Hodgkins the space free as it allows Hodgkins to keep an office in Lee which he might otherwise not be able to do.

"When you've got your state representative right here, he's under your thumb," Deely said with a smile.

Lee town meeting set for Sept. 26

Hoping to set the town's budget in order, Lee selectmen officially scheduled a special town meeting to be held at Lee Center School Sept. 26.

The two principle orders of business will be to reconsider the town's budget to get within the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2 and to consider amending state legislation creating a town administrator position for town government.

The Finance Committee and selectmen have pared the budget down, and used reserve accounts to bridge a better-than-\$200,000 deficit between what was approved at the town meeting and what the town can raise in revenues without seeking to raise the Proposition 2 1/2 levy limit.

Some of the proposed items to be cut include capital projects, the mailing of town reports and the town's contribution to Christmas tree lights. Although the town will be able to "squeeze by this year," officials say next year the town will face some serious problems.

Lee church meets tall order

Advocate

By Erik Bruun

9-11-91

It was a tall order. With a congregation of about 200 members, the Lee Congregational Church could boast having the tallest wooden spire of its type in the country.

But the congregation was also saddled with a major problem when the spire was labeled a hazard. The spire needed work and the church needed more than \$250,000 worth of repairs done to it.

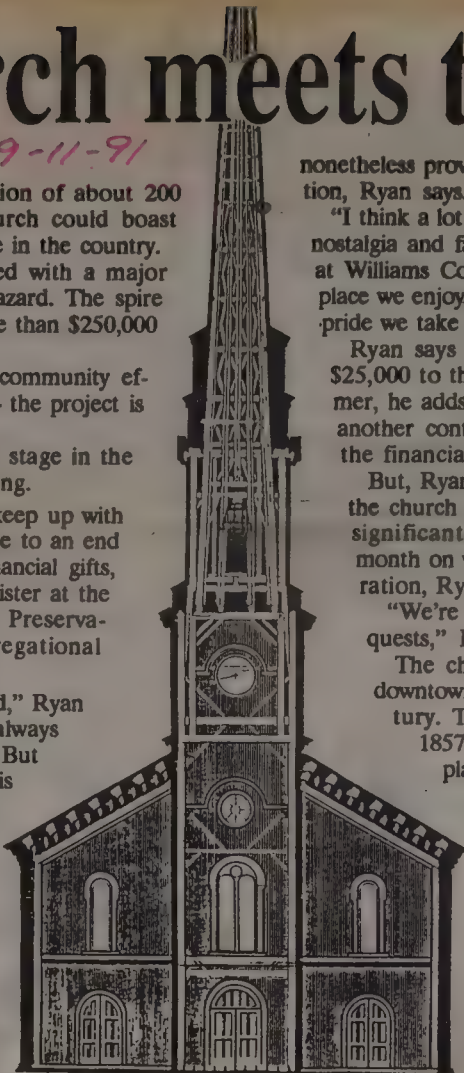
Five years later — after an enormous community effort and the support of a distant family — the project is close to completion.

Workers this month began the fourth stage in the restoration of the historic wooden building.

And the church's financial struggle to keep up with the costs of the massive project may come to an end later this month through some major financial gifts, says the Rev. Walter Ryan, a former minister at the church and co-chairman of the Historic Preservation Committee of the Lee Congregational Church.

"Of course, the job will never really end," Ryan says. "It's an old building and there's always more maintenance that needs to be done. But right now it looks like we'll get there. This place has been a great burden on the congregation with only 200 members or so. I've been working on it myself for about 20 years."

The restoration has not only drawn the support of most of the community in Lee but also the Hyde family which left Lee many years ago. With family members scattered across the country, the descendants of the Rev. Alvan Hyde — a minister who served the congregation from 1792 to 1833 — have



Lee Congregational Church

we didn't have a chance," Ryan says.

Ryan says that in addition to the community support, the Hyde family has been key to the project's success.

"We got a lot of help from them," Ryan says. "They've been very interested in helping the church for more than a century. The first permanent pastor was Alvan Hyde. His descendants have been very close to the church and have been very supportive."

So supportive that even though the closest Hyde lives 35 miles away in Williamstown, the Hydies have continued to keep a strong interest in the preservation of the church.

"All the children came there and became part of the church," John Hyde says. "We have strong feelings toward Lee and that church. The family's been helpful when it can."

Hyde says that after Alvan Hyde died, his youngest son, Alexander, lived in Lee at what is now Aardenburg Antiques on West Park Street and was a church deacon until he died in 1881. His oldest daughter, Adeline Marsh, remained in the house until she died in 1933. At that point, her nephew, George Alvan Hyde — who lived in Kansas — inherited the building. The house became a summer home for him and his family, which included five children, says John Hyde, the middle child.

"Although we have never really lived in Lee we spent a lot of time there," John Hyde says. "That's where we grew up as kids. Lee is a place we very much enjoyed."

He says he and his brothers and sister often return to Lee with the church serving as the center of the family's interests. The family has closely followed the restoration project and helped it along.

"It's amazing what they've done," says John Hyde. "The size of that church represents a different time. We've helped out but so have a lot of people."

nonetheless proved to be a financial anchor in the restoration, Ryan says.

"I think a lot of what we have done has had to do with nostalgia and family pride," says John Hyde, a professor at Williams College, who lives closest to Lee. "It was a place we enjoyed very much as kids. There's that and the pride we take in the Hyde name."

Ryan says the Hyde family contributed more than \$25,000 to the church restoration. Up until this summer, he adds, it appeared as if the Hydies would make another contribution to help finish the restoration as the financial situation faltered.

But, Ryan says, a couple of bequests were made to the church from deceased church members who left significant gifts. The church will vote later this month on whether to spend the money on the restoration, Ryan says.

"We're hoping to clear all the debts with the bequests," Ryan says.

The church, which serves as a centerpiece to downtown Lee, was founded in the late 18th century. The original church was destroyed in an 1857 fire. The existing church was built to replace it almost right away. The steeple, supported by a 105-foot timber frame, is the tallest of its type in the country and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Although much work was done on the building in the 1970s to paint and repair the exterior and preserve much of the interior, engineers discovered in 1986 that the spire was in dire condition and needed to be repaired.

"The town threatened to close it because it was a hazard," Ryan says.

Lee church nears end of line

Advocate 9-11-91

Continued from page 1

A major fund-raising effort was started to restore the church from the steeple right down to the ground. After first repairing the wooden steeple's interior, the church moved forward to restore the exterior which was taken apart and put back together by expert woodworkers. The next stage involved doing interior work in the basement, Ryan says. The church's Seth Thomas Model Tower Clock — one of only two in the country — was also restored through a grant from Toole Insurance, Ryan says.

Now, the church has hired Rienzi Painting Co. of Pittsfield to scrape and paint the facade and two sides of the main building.

"There's 100 years of paint on there so there's a big process we have to go through. There are a lot of repairs that need to be done," Ryan says.

The final stage will be to do repair work in the bell tower, which, like the spire, will require expert craftsmen.

Doing the work has been easier said than done.

"Raising the money has been quite a big deal," Ryan says. Because of the church's prominent position in town and historical value, however, virtually every group in town got involved in raising money for the church including the Kiwanis Club, several businesses and even other churches.

"It's been an ecumenical thing all along," Ryan says.

State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, was instrumental in securing two state grants totalling \$73,000, Ryan adds. "If he hadn't been there in the selection process,

Meeting slated for Lee industrial park

Advocate 9-11-91

The Lee selectmen agreed Monday night to schedule a special town meeting in January for the town to consider a proposed zoning bylaw that would allow for the development of an industrial park on Route 102.

The Lee Planning Board made the request for a vote in order to pave the way for the industrial park. The board has been working on the office park and light industrial bylaw for almost two years in anticipation of the park being developed.

Hoping to find space for local companies such as ECH Will Manufacturing Co. to relocate, the Lee Community Development Corp. has been working with the Massachusetts Land Bank to build an industrial park in Lee. The efforts by the volunteer board, however, have been stalled because of financial and regulatory obstacles.

CDC member Anthony Caropreso says that in addition to interest from ECH Will, two smaller companies have ex-

pressed an interest in locating at the park. No specific date was set for the special town meeting.

In other selectmen's business, board members debated the merits of hiring a local person for town administrator. While Selectman Martin Deely says there are several local people such as Lee Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo who should be considered for the job, Selectman Joseph DuPont says an out-of-town person with no history in the town would be preferable.

"I think we need someone from Osh Kosh," DuPont said. Selectmen Chairman Diane Roosa said she wanted to wait until the town seeks and receives applicants for the job before commenting on the issue.

The board learned that Conservation Commission member Jane Langer has resigned from the board. The selectmen appointed Rebecca Lord in her place.

DuPont vs. Garrity ends with permit for new apartments

Advocate 9-11-91

Saying he was "tired of wearing the black hat," Lee Selectman Joseph F. DuPont cast the third and deciding vote last week granting a special permit to Thomas and Barbara Garrity for a six-apartment building on West Park Street.

Garrity has been trying to gain the special permit since the spring and was forced to lay off many members of his work crew because of procedural delays.

While Garrity says the town's procedures and DuPont placed obstacle after obstacle in his quest for a special permit, DuPont and Town Counsel Jerome Scully say Garrity has failed to meet several of the town's standards and procedures.

"There's no reason for anyone on this board to vote for this," DuPont said last week after fellow board members Diane Roosa and Martin Deely approved the special permit. "This whole thing has been a fiasco. Procedures have not been followed."

Garrity and his attorney and engineer

William Volk of Cummington, however, said procedures were followed "to the letter" and that the only problem has been DuPont, who Garrity accused before even submitting an application last spring of being biased against him.

"All the boards have given us approval and now we're running up against you," Garrity told DuPont. The selectmen approved a special permit for Garrity in June but later had to rescind the vote when they learned of procedural problems.

DuPont says Garrity failed to follow procedures in submitting the second special permit application. The contractor, he adds, has avoided several requirements from the beginning of the process. DuPont, however, says he is tired of being the sole person to oppose Garrity's project and would vote for it despite the problems.

"I see no reason to vote for this. I'm tired of wearing a black hat. It's wrong, but I will vote for it," DuPont said.

Eagle 9-11-91

Water expert to share his knowledge with East European cities

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Peter J. Kolodziej, who is director and sanitarian for the Tri-Town Health Department, left Kennedy International Airport in New York City Tuesday for cities in the former Soviet Union as a member of a U.S. team of water-industry specialists.

An important item in his luggage is a roll of fiberglass screening.

The screening is not to strain caviar from the Moscow tap water. It's for a one-time acquaintance from the town of Lee, Alan Cooperman, then a reporter for The Eagle and now a reporter for The Associated Press in Moscow.

It seems that Cooperman's apartment in the Soviet capital lacks window screens, and on warm summer nights the choice has pretty much lain between being baked or bitten to death. By virtue of letters, telephone calls and a visit from Cooperman's parents in Stockbridge, Dr. Martin Cooperman and Leona Cooperman, Kolodziej is headed for the land of the Volga boatmen — and of Spartan furnishings — with this practical gift in tow.

Hopes to see relatives

He also is taking some telephone numbers and addresses of relatives in the Ukraine, cousins on his mother's side of the family. He has never met them but has been exchanging letters and says he expects to meet some of them at last.

He also hopes, he says, to visit Dnepropetrovsk, a Ukrainian city where his mother was born, although he is not sure whether there will be time.

What, you may ask, will he do otherwise? The answer seems to be that on most days he will talk with Russian, Ukrainian and Estonian counterparts on such weighty topics as surface-water treatment, waste-water treatment and facility design, pollution prevention, development of water supplies, setting water rates and more.

Kolodziej (the name is Polish) was invited to participate in this tour last May under what is called the Citizen Ambassador Program, an offspring of People to People International, founded by former President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956.

Why the invitation?

He said he does not know precisely why he was asked to go, "but I certainly hope to find out." He said he "would like to think that part of it was a recommendation" from a colleague or col-



Gerald B. O'Connor / Berkshire Eagle Staff
Peter J. Kolodziej

leagues who believe he will bring to the group knowledge of rural and small-town water-supply issues as well as perspectives on cooperative organization.

The Tri-Town Health Department covers Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge and answers to the boards of health in those towns. Kolodziej, who has been with the department since 1974, is a long-time member of the American Water Works Association and also says he may have been contacted because of that membership.

At any rate, he is traveling with about a dozen other specialists on a 13-day tour (Tuesday through Sept. 23) that will take them to Moscow in the Russian Republic, Kharkov in the Ukraine and Tallinn in Estonia. The leader of the delegation works for the Portland (Ore.) Bureau of Water Works.

The trip is not a freebie. Kolodziej and the others have to pay for their own air fares and nearly all other costs including room and meals. The individual cost is \$4,375, which Kolodziej says caused him to gulp at first, "but I decided an opportunity like this doesn't come along every day and I might as well jump at it."

Eagle 9-12-91

Tri-Town Health unit offers sanitation course

LEE — The Tri-Town Health Department serving Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge again will sponsor an applied food service certification course. The department urges food service operations to have at least one person trained in basic food sanitation.

The course at the present time is voluntary, but by January 1993 it will become mandatory, according to assistant health agent Max Bookless.

The course will begin Oct. 8 for five weeks from 2:30 to 5. It will be held in the Airolti Building in Lee.

The cost is \$110, which includes instruction, textbook, certification exam and diploma.

For further information, one may call 243-2100, ext. 33, or the instructor, Nancy Ruderman, at 443-3352.

Lee board agrees to January vote on industrial park

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Planning Board and the Community Development Corp. won a commitment from the Selectmen on Monday night to schedule a special town meeting some time in January to enact a light-industry zoning bylaw and finally establish an industrial park on the north side of Route 102 in South Lee.

Various town boards and agencies have proposed a light-industry zone on that section of Route 102 intermittently over a period of some 30 years, but until the last year and a half, the proposals have not come to fruition.

Now, the development corporation, which has been negotiating with owners of three parcels of land for all or most of that time, is nearing the point of acquisition, according to corporation secretary Anthony Caropreso.

"We've been working with the Government Land Bank" to acquire the property, he told the Selectmen. "When everything comes into place," he said, "we want to have the zoning in place and hopefully have something started by the beginning of the year."

Hoped-for 'magnet'

Having "something in place" means a properly zoned office and light industrial park that, by virtue of Land Bank financing, could be equipped with utilities and roads as a magnet for either new or existing businesses.

It has been a stated hope of the corporation for at least a year to interest an existing Lee manufacturer, E.C.H. Will Manufacturing Corp., in erecting a new plant in the park — if Will should decide to move from its present site on Route 20 just south of the Massachusetts Turnpike interchange.

Will, a subsidiary of a German corporation of the same name, is a maker of sheeters, machines that cut paper. It leases its quarters, and its directors are ex-

pected to decide in November whether and where to move.

The Selectmen's commitment to a January meeting marks the second special town meeting of the fiscal year. The first one, formally to adopt a balanced budget and to approve some amendments to the legislation creating Lee's first selectmen-administrator form of government, is scheduled Sept. 26.

Jill Bickford Groff, the Planning Board member who has been acting as liaison between her board and the development corporation, said it would be helpful to earmark the January town meeting "solely [for] the new zoning bylaw."

Robert W. Birch, Planning Board chairman, said the meeting logically should be designed to enact the bylaw and then to rezone the Route 102 property. Both would require two-thirds votes of the town meeting.

The bylaw, said Groff, is roughly three-quarters complete, but it is a complex undertaking and will entail some amendments to the existing subdivision bylaw. That's because a park established under the new zone, officially to be called an office park and light-industry zone, will be treated as a subdivision, she said. Further, there would be separate standards for, say, roads in such a park.

So far, said Caropreso, "a couple of small businesses" have declared interest in locating at the site.

Will's executive vice president, John D. Eisenhower, said in March that the industrial park could be considered if it were owned by the town and ready for entry when the company makes its decision.

Will, however, is looking at several other sites in Berkshire County, including property adjacent to its present quarters. With a payroll more than 100 workers, it is a business that Lee does not want to lose.

Coalition Plans School-Choice Forum To Weigh Impact on 2 Local Districts

Record 9-13-91

GREATBARRINGTON — An educational forum on the new school choice bill is being planned for October 3 by the Coalitions for Education of the Berkshire Hills and the Southern Berkshire regional school districts. Featured speakers include Senator Jane Swift and Representative Christopher Hodgkins.

The superintendents from four South County school districts—Lee, Lenox, Southern Berkshire, and Berkshire Hills—

will briefly describe the impact of the law upon their districts. A moderator will conduct a question and answer period from the audience.

The coalitions hope to use this forum to give parents more information about the school choice bill, how it works, and what its effects will be on the South County school districts. The related issue of combining districts is expected to be discussed.

EAGLE

School mergers gaining strength

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The momentum that is clearly building toward the formation this fall of a new K-12 regional school district made up of Otis and Sandisfield prompted Lee School Committee members Tuesday night to pledge continued discussion of their own version of the same thing: regionalization with Lenox and Tyringham.

The Otis-Sandisfield merger strikes a majority in the two towns as the most sensible solution to space crises that are affecting both of their schools, said Denise Gould of Otis. Remaining as they are could lead to mounting costs and the tuitioning of larger numbers of children to out-of-town schools than are sent now, she said.

Gould, chairwoman of the Otis-Sandisfield Regional School Planning Committee, set forth the options facing the two towns at a special meeting of the Union 29 School Committee at the Central School here.

She and Garth E. Story, principal of the Otis Consolidated School, made it clear that an agreement to form the region will most likely be submitted to town-meeting votes before Nov. 15. Approval by the town meetings would launch the new region the following September.

Gould's presentation, which was strictly informational, eventually led to talk of a Lee-Lenox-Tyringham region.

Bigger and better

An earlier suggestion that this trio of towns form such a regional school district came during an Aug. 20 meeting of the Lee School Committee. At the time, Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said Lee High School is small — about 300 students — and could benefit from enlargement wherein course offerings could be expanded and administrative costs proportionately reduced.

The Lenox school system, and Lenox Memorial High School, are even smaller than their Lee counterparts, he observed.

After the Aug. 20 meeting, the topic was dropped, but Lee Committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey told the Union 29 members

MERGER, continued on B6

► LEE: The Lee Housing Authority will hold a meeting Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. on the state's plans to construct a new building at 104 Laurel St. to serve clientele of the state Department of Mental Health. A representative of the department will attend the meeting to discuss plans for the site.

Architectural designs will be exhibited. The meeting will be held at Brown Court, the Lee Housing Authority's complex for the elderly on Marble Street.

■ MERGER, from B1

Tuesday night that his committee expects to "look at formation of a subcommittee to study" the proposal in the next few weeks.

He invited members of the Union 29 committee to attend.

The union is made up of Lee, Otis and Tyringham, which share the costs, on a proportional basis, of a superintendent and a central administration. Lee's share is 69 percent, Otis' 21 percent and Tyringham's the remainder, 10 percent.

Other schooling decisions are made by the member town's school committees.

If Otis and Sandisfield form a regional district, however, the union would have to be dissolved because Otis would petition the other two for formal release, said Gould.

Not only a majority of the union's school committees would have to agree to the dissolution, but a Union School Committee majority would have to do the same, said Zukowski.

And if Lee and Tyringham should refuse to grant the release, said Gould, "the state would intervene. It would be an unfriendly situation I would think."

The reason for the proposed Otis-Sandisfield regionalization, she and others said, is not only that both their schools are crowded but that the two towns share a long common border,

their children already have social contacts through such activities as summer baseball and winter skiing, and the state financial aid that would accrue to the region would be considerably greater than the two towns together receive now.

And while state education officials say towns must show there are more than just money advantages, Gould and others from the two towns say this should prove no problem.

Principal Story, for example, said the Otis School population has jumped by nearly 10 percent this year to 113, the school is jammed and educational quality is threatened.

The Sandisfield Elementary School is even more restricted, said Kathryn LaGrant of Otis. It has no gymnasium and no lunch program and its prekindergarten and kindergarten classes meet in the town hall because the school building is too small, she said.

Part of union

Sandisfield is part of Union 39, which embraces it and neighboring Granville in Hampden County. But the union's superintendent, Gerald Fortier, is nearly 25 miles away in Southwick, where most of his time is devoted to a regional school district based in that town.

Both Sandisfield and Otis tuition their older children, in grades 7 through 12, to middle

and high schools out of town, Sandisfield's to Berkshire Hills Regional District schools in Great Barrington, and Otis' to Lee.

While the Otis-Sandisfield region would be a K-12 region, the older children would still be tuitioned to the same school districts, most people said. Lee committee members had voiced worry that the Lee schools, which receive tuitions for approximately 70 Otis students who attend Lee schools each year, might lose some of those youngsters.

Otis officials thought not. "Otis has always had a policy of letting kids go to high school wherever they want," said Otis' David Roberts. Nearly all of them choose Lee, he said, although two did choose to go to Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington this year.

The prospect that students would be on school buses longer than at present was dismissed by some of those present. James M. Carr from Sandisfield, a member of the Regional School Planning Board, said some students already spend an hour or more on buses when they attend schools in Great Barrington.

Lee's Lahey at one point cautioned Otis to move slowly. He said the promise of greater state aid has to be taken with a grain of salt. Given the state's poor record, he said, "I have no confidence the state will support you."

9-13-91

The Berkshire Record, Fr

Selectmen Gain Praise and Wrath For Special Town Meeting Plans

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Already committed to one special town meeting for fiscal 1991, selectmen agreed Monday to schedule another January special session to consider a request from the planning board and the community development corporation to enact a light-industry zoning by-law.

The three agencies joined for a short session during Monday's regular selectmen's meeting.

The January special town meeting, selectmen aver, will confine itself to a zoning change proposition that will permit an industrial park on the north side of Route 102 in South Lee.

The upcoming September 26 special session will consider two items: the formal adoption of a budget, manipulated into balance by money transfers; and, more significantly, changes to the already approved measure to create a town administrator form of government.

The creation of light industry zoning presages the acquisition by CDC, in connection with the state Land Bank agency, of 70-plus acres on Route 102. Fifty of the those acres are developable,

according to a town study done on the land, says Abby Kramer of the planning department.

At issue, first of all, is creating a light industry bylaw, said Jill Bickford Groff, a member of CDC and the planning board.

Then comes work to amend the existing subdivision control bylaws which now cover only residential development.

Groff wants the subdivision provisions to cover industrial development as a way of maintaining control of such planning issues as vehicle and utility access.

If Monday's experience relating to the town administrator means anything, September's session promises to drive several people to distraction.

Selectmen keep calling the new person, who now has about the same status as that tree that keeps falling in the mute woods, "town manger" instead of "town administrator" and, even though Deely says in this day and age it doesn't really make any difference, the mere mention of a manager sends citizen August Passetto into near shock.

Passetto was especially exercised by what he claimed was a foregone conclusion on the part

of selectmen to hire a specific candidate for the new job of town administrator, a town government change already approved by town meeting and by the required state legislative act.

All three members of the board tried to assure Passetto that, first of all, the changes in the town administrator agreement proposed for town meeting approval have first to be made before the position is even advertised. No one person has sanction, they said.

Actually, said Dupont, "I'd like to see someone from East Oshkosh" take the \$45,000 post.

But Passetto was having none of that. He eventually left the selectmen's office, vowing to continue his fight for it wasn't exactly clear what.

The proposed additions to the town administrator agreement include switching the positions of town clerk, treasurer, tax collector and boards of assessors and health from elected to appointed status and removing a bachelor's degree from the list of town administrator qualifications. "As a substitute for the degree we propose accepting 10 years of municipal administrative experience," Deely said.

Similes pop up like mushrooms



Figures of speech are irresistible to Lee editor

By Pat Nichols
Special to The Eagle

LEE Elyse Sommer of Lee and Forest Hills, N.Y., to use an old simile, is as happy as a clam. Or maybe as happy as two clams who escaped the clam rake. Her new book, "As One Mad With Wine, and Other Similes," is selling steadily, she summers in the Berkshires, and she has several other books in process.

Elyse, a literary agent with her own agency in New York, and her husband, Mike, collaborated on the collection of over 8,000 similes, those colorful, succinct figures of speech that make writing, as well as speaking, come alive with images of unlike comparisons.

Beth Dempsey, the public relations manager at Visible Ink Press, said that the response to the book has been terrific both from the press and from customers.

"Visible Ink is a subsidiary of Gale Research Company, which is a well-known reference company," she said. "This is the first time we've repackaged for the non-academic customer," she said. "We looked for the strongest area of consumer interest."

Similes are easy to spot, introduced usually by "as" or "like." They bring clarity and texture to communication, add sparkle to advertising and, according to Sommer, are the most accessible of all figures of speech.

Likes words

Elyse, an editor and writer as well as an agent, is a book lover with a long fascination for words, especially similes.

"I am a word person," she said. "I started to collect similes many years ago."

Each time she found one she liked, she added it to the growing list. As the list grew,

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Mike and Elyse Sommer show off the new book of similes on the porch of their home in Lee.

Similes pop up like mushrooms

■ SIMILE, from H1

she realized she had the makings of a book. Enter the computer.

"The final put-together wasn't bad," she said. "But, I could never have done it without a computer. The computer stores the information, then helps with cross-references and alphabetizing."

Mike added his own expertise as he read uncounted mysteries, a fertile field for similes. He also helped with illustrations and interviews.

The poet Algernon Swinburne's "babble as one mad with wine" inspired the title of the book, the first real attempt in 65 years to offer a compilation of similes, according to Sommer. The last try, based on slips an author collected in a shoe box, resulted in little more than a pamphlet.

Sommer placed her book in a broad category known as enabling books, books in which you find out something you didn't know. "I like organizing information," she said. "I hope people don't see the book as a swipe volume. Instead, use your own creativity. If you think you can't take a cliché, rework it."

Cliches are OK

She included clichés even though they often appear tired and worn because the worst cliché says reams more than the "you knows" that pepper modern-day conversation. A professional puzzler who heard about the book when Sommer was writing it advised her to include clichés because he uses them often when he schemes his puzzles.

Shakespeare's works are especially rich in similes, according to Sommer, as is the Bible. Witness Shakespeare's brief but eloquent "as fair as day" or the pithy "crushed like rotten apples." The Bible abounds with true-to-life similes: "Bold as a lion" and "hot as an oven" are two examples.

Other similes were part of the tradition of New England folklore, where they received decided respect.

"People even kept similes in family books," she said. "Today we don't care as much about words."

Similes aren't difficult, she added. Even 2nd graders are good at them. Mystery writers have long been devotees of the form as they wind through tales of murder or mayhem. John D. MacDonald, for instance, describes for the reader "a bed that sagged like a hammock," leaving no doubt in anyone's mind about the condition of that resting place.

Sue Grafton's "carpeting as soft underfoot as moss" enables the reader to feel the texture right through the text.

Sommer said Edith Wharton was a wonderful user of similes. "She used them as seasoning, a few here and there. She didn't hit you over the head with them, they enriched the work," she said.

Herman Melville's "clangied like fifty fire engines" rings in the reader's ear. Raymond



SHOULDERS LIKE THE PARTHENON

Illustration from the Sommers' book.

Chandler's "a thin plaintive sound, like a starved cat," makes the fear real.

Snappy snippets

In the introduction to "As One Mad With Wine," Sommer refers to similes as "snappy snippets, the original soundbites." She arranged the book according to categories, but she didn't stop there. Her personal stamp colors the comments, modernizations and cross-references. The book is full of "sees" and "see also's" to send the reader dipping into other possible solutions.

Under "houses" she suggests checking furniture and furnishings, under "pain" she adds "see also health." If you need a jump start for a simile for dreams, Sommer suggests a look at "ambition" or "sleep" as well as those under the original category.

Notes added

You can browse through other writers' words to illuminate dreams. Are the dreams you hope to describe "dreams withered like flowers that are blighted by frost" as Ellen Glasgow's are? Or do the dreams "pop out like old fillings in the teeth" as Diane Wakooski's do?

When necessary, Sommer clarifies the quote or explains where it came from and how it changed over time. Sometimes it was impossible to track down the originator of an oft-used phrase and nothing would do but to attribute it to Anon.

The book is arranged according to categories and authors. If you want to click into a favorite author's style of simile, or see how often an author uses the figure of speech, scan the Author's Index. If you want a simile to jog your own creative process, take a look under the categories.

Sommer is a native of Germany who left that country for the United States the day after Kris-

tallnacht, "the night of broken glass" in 1938 when the Nazis began to destroy synagogues, windows of Jewish homes and the Jews' possessions.

Remembering that experience, she said, "It gives me a nice demarcation. If something is vague in my memory, I think about whether it happened there or here."

Sommer's family lived in North Carolina for a year after the move and she remembers it fondly. "People were very nice to us, we were made to feel very special."

While her family eventually settled in Long Island, both Elyse and Mike Sommer enjoy the Berkshires.

"We find that the parts come together here," she said. "We meet people we haven't seen in years. The first person I spoke to here was a person I went to high school with. My husband met a woman he went to grade school with."

Sommer has some thoughts about books in general. "People complain about books, about the cost. They don't stop to think that they can pass them around or reread them. We have a reading family. We pass books around."

Since "One Mad With Wine" is a good chairside book, you can return to it over and over. "However, this book is addictive," publicist Dempsey warned. "People tend to go right through it. Some of the examples are poetic, some are just nice reading. It is organized thematically. We planned it as an organizational tool for writers."

The book, priced at \$17.95, is a good read. And if your appetite is whetted for similes, if you want to brighten up your speech or writing capabilities, or if you want Sommer's tips on how to create similes, you'll find "As One Mad With Wine" in most Berkshire County bookstores.

Seven county pupils named National Merit semifinalists

Seven Berkshire County high school seniors are among 15,000 semifinalists announced in the 1992 National Merit Scholarship competition.

They are Rebecca L. Allen, Lee High School; Jeff A. Breidenbach, formerly of Pittsfield High School, and Anna L. Bunce and Alec MacGillis, both of PHS; Stephen E. Hamm, Wahconah Regional High School; Eloise Pasachoff, Mount Greylock Regional High School, and Nathaniel T. White, Buxton School in Williamstown.

According to Elaine S. Detweiler, public information director of the National Merit Scholarship Corp., about 90 percent of the semifinalists could become finalists for the Merit scholarships that will be awarded next spring. Some

6,100 scholarships, worth an estimated \$26 million, will be awarded nationwide.

The number of semifinalists in each state is allocated according to that state's percentage of the national total of graduating high school seniors.



Rebecca Allen
Lee High School

Cable News

Century Public Access Begins

LEE—Century Berkshire Cable's Channel 11 public access schedule for the week of September 19-25 will begin with "Let's Play," a look at the proposed playgrounds in Great Barrington and Housatonic, at 5:30 on Thursday. It will be followed by Jerry's Place at 6:00 p.m., with guests Jeff Scace, owner of the Berkshire Market Place, local artist Frank Monterosso, and North Adams Mayor John Barrett.

The August 24 and 25 Night Cruisers Car Cruise, Sock Hop, and Car Show at Brodie Moun-

tain will be on Friday, 5:00 p.m.

On Monday at 6:00 p.m., Senator Jane Swift will address local issues.

On Tuesday, John Kerry will speak on the POW/MIA issue at 5:00 p.m., followed by That's Our Opinion at 6:00 p.m.

Coverage of the Lee firemen's muster will be shown on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m., with Affairs of the State, a forum government and public affairs with a focus on Massachusetts politics, at 6:00 p.m.

The week ends with Jerry's Place, Thursday, 6:00 p.m.

Hazardous waste collection slated for tri-town residents

LEE — The Tri-Town Health Department will sponsor a household hazardous-waste collection Saturday, Oct. 5, from 10 to 1 at the Lee Department of Public Works garage off Railroad Street.

The collection, which will be without charge to householders, will be for residents of the tri-town region: Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge.

It will be paid for with funds budgeted for hazardous-waste collection by the three towns this year. The total available is \$12,000, according to Tri-Town technician Diane Larrivee, and if it is used up before the collection hours are over, the collection will stop.

Disposal of hazardous wastes, even of the household variety, is extremely costly, she observed.

Contracting to dispose of the materials is Laidlaw Environmental Services of North Andover, which has managed similar collections for Tri-Town satisfactorily on two prior occasions, Larrivee said.

The limit will be 5 gallons of waste from any one household. Larrivee said the limit is intended to allow as many residents as possible to take part.

Typical household hazardous materials, according to the health department, are drain and rug cleaners, furniture polish, photographic chemicals, oil-based paints, crankcase oil, batteries, antifreeze, pesticides, herbicides, silver polish and flea collars.

Non-hazardous waste and radioactive waste will not be accepted.

Helping to sponsor the collection are Mead Corp., which is paying for publicity about the collection, and the Berkshire Conservation District and the Arm & Hammer company.

State DPW may study Golden Hill Rd. bridge

By Gerald B. O'Connor

Berkshire Eagle Staff 9-18-91

LEE — The Selectmen learned Monday that the state Department of Public Works may undertake an engineering study of the historic Golden Hill Road bridge that an ad hoc committee of town residents wants to preserve.

Ross B. Dindio, the DPW's District 1 highway engineer, said in a letter read by Selectmen Monday that his office is "prepared to recommend this course of action" to superiors at the department's Boston headquarters.

Furthermore, he said, a federal government program for bridge rehabilitation and replacement "does permit historic bridge rehabilitation" and in fact "encourages retention, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse" of historic structures.

But before he forwards his recommendation to Boston, he told the Selectmen, he wants clarification of the position of the Selectmen and the special bridge study committee on a couple of points in the committee's recommendation of Aug. 26.

At that time, the committee said it wants first to repair the existing bridge and strengthen it so its load limit can be raised from 5 to 10 tons. If that's not feasible, the committee said, it wants a "foot-print substitute," a new bridge of similar design and material — but slightly wider than the present one — erected on the same site.

The committee rejected as "not satisfactory" a preliminary layout from Dindio's office of a new two-lane, prestressed-concrete bridge that would be some 65 feet down-

stream from the present bridge site.

Dindio said he wants to know if the Selectmen agree with the "not satisfactory" assessment and if they cleave to the committee's two alternatives for a new bridge in light of the fact that "not all people in the neighborhood share the opinion that Golden Hill Road should remain open with a functional bridge."

The bridge, built in 1885, is the oldest of only five lenticular steel "pony truss" bridges in the state. It is one lane wide and residents nearby want it preserved, although some, as Dindio observed, want it closed to vehicular traffic and retained as a foot bridge alone.

The study committee, two of whose members were selected purely because they lived in the bridge neighborhood, has urged that an engineering study be undertaken to determine if the bridge can be rebuilt.

It is this study that Dindio said he would recommend the state DPW undertake.

Sane/Freeze to meet

PITTSFIELD — There will be a meeting of the Berkshire Sane/Freeze educational committee tomorrow at the Unitarian Church at 175 Wendell Ave. at 7 p.m.

The purpose will be to formulate strategies to help gather and impart information to local communities on the subjects of teaching peace, nuclear disarmament and economic conversion.

More information is available at the office of Berkshire Sane/Freeze, 499-0906.

Hazardous Waste Clean-Up Days Planned in Lee

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Just in case you've run out of baking soda from that box of Arm and Hammer you bought five years ago, you're going to be able to acquire a lifetime supply of the odor eater, cooking aid and politically correct drain cleaner at the Tri-Town Health Department hazardous waste collection situation Oct. 5 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Eaton Street near the post office and Price Chopper.

Those wishing to dispose of such materials as oil paint, batteries (any size) pesticides, waste oil, anti-freeze - all the good stuff, may bring up to five gallons to the collection depot.

Liquids such as paint and pesticides should be in their original containers, according to Diana Larrivee, assistant health agent for Tri-Town.

"That's so we can identify what it is," she explained.

The baking soda, which was donated, will be handed out with a list of household uses, such as drain cleaning and silver polishing. (Bakings soda's usefulness, in cooking should not be underestimated, especially by those who enjoy such items as butter-milk biscuits.)

The noxious stuff will be carted away by a waste disposal company, first to North Andover where what can be incinerated, will be incinerated; the rest, Larrivee said, will be taken to other designated disposal sites.

This is the fourth such collections the board has organized. Last year's haul filled 12 to 14, 55-gallon drums, Larrivee said.

AIDS education video offered to police

LEE — Approximately 30 police professionals attended an HIV/AIDS education lecture given by Medical Examiner Jon M. Valigorski recently at the Lee Library, according to Jane Kelley, program supervisor.

The program was sponsored by the Lee Visiting Nurse Association and the Berkshire County chapter of the American Red Cross.

A videotape of the program may be borrowed by South County police departments for those professionals who were unable to attend.

Anyone interested in viewing the tape has been asked to contact the Lee Visiting Nurse Association at 243-1212.

Lee voters wrestle with government forms

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 9-23-91

LEE — The final shape of the Selectmen-administrator form of government in Lee will be fashioned Thursday night at a special town meeting whose primary purpose is to balance the town budget.

If there is any discussion about the meeting — and what there is appears muted — it is about Article 15, which, if approved, would change the special

act that authorizes the administrator form of government in two ways.

It would make appointive some of the town offices that are now elective and it would allow the Selectmen, who would have hiring and firing power over the administrator, to choose a candidate for the post based on municipal administrative experience alone.

The act, which was approved in its

LEE, continued on B2

LEE, from B1

present form by voters at the annual town election May 13, says the town shall continue to elect town meeting members, Selectmen, moderator, School Committee, Housing Authority, assessors, Planning Board, Community Development Corp., clerk, treasurer, collector, constables and Board of Health.

The change proposed in the upcoming meeting would remove the assessors, clerk, treasurer, collector and Board of Health from the election slate and make their offices appointive instead. The appointing officer would be the administrator.

The change would also authorize hiring as an administrator someone who has 10 years of "municipal administrative experience" in place of someone with the educational requirements set forth in the present act. Those requirements are a bachelor's degree and "five years of full-time paid experience in a supervisory administrative position in the public sector," or a master's degree and three years of such experience.

One of the reasons for this change is reportedly to open the door to municipal officers in Lee who have supervised employees and departments but lack the college degrees originally called for. J. Peter Scolforo, longtime superintendent of the town's Department of Public Works, has

most frequently been mentioned in connection with the post.

At Selectmen's meetings and at a special informational meeting early in the month on the proposed changes, there was a mixture of opinion on them.

Three speakers at the latter meeting, Lenox attorney Sarah H. Bell, Williamstown Selectman J. O'Brien Locke and Williamstown Town Manager Steven L. Ledoux, said they felt it would be highly unlikely that any administrator would not appoint to the positions they held the officers who had previously been elected.

Objections

But likelihood and fact are two different things, and some of Lee's present elective officers whose posts would become appointive have understandably raised objections.

One, Edward M. Briggs, an assessor, said, for example, that it would be the town's loss if the collector, Janice G. Smith, should fail to continue in her office for lack of appointment.

To this, one of the Selectmen, Martin H. Deely, who backs the change, said there is no reason she should not win appointment.

The town meetings — there are actually two of them — will start at 7:30 p.m. in the Lee Central School. The first will be about 15 minutes long and will seek approval of three budget transfers from available funds to pay unemployment insurance and cover some Selectmen's and sealer of weights and measures' expenses to close the books on the 1991 fiscal year.

Budget situation

The principal meeting, to balance the budget for fiscal 1992, will begin at 7:45.

Thirteen of the first 14 articles pretty much cover the balancing act through a series of amendments, cuts in various department outlays, transfers and, in one case, dissolution of an insurance trust whose funds would be transferred into the town treasury.

The various actions, if approved, will remove some \$248,000 from the town's current spending plan and bring the town budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 down to \$8.56 million to \$8.2 million.

One of the articles calls for a halving of the \$45,000 originally recommended for the first town administrator's salary to \$22,500. The cut recognizes that if an administrator is hired sometime during the present fiscal year, he or she won't come aboard until the year is at least half gone.

Fire marshal rules Lee Oil has valid propane license

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 9/24/91

LEE — Some six months after he said he would issue a ruling, the state fire marshal has notified Lee officials that Lee Oil Co. has a valid license for storage of propane at the company's terminal at the outer end of Maple Street.

The terminal is about a mile southeast of the town center.

Fire Chief Ronald J. Driscoll, who had been entreated by the Selectmen two weeks ago to contact the fire marshal to learn the status of the license, provided the board with the validating letter last night.

He said he presumed the owner of Lee Oil, William F. Miller, would contact him to apply for a permit to exercise the license.

Ferncliff site out

But although the fire marshal, Joseph A. O'Keefe, approved the Maple Street license, he turned thumbs down on a license for propane storage at Lee Oil's headquarters building at 19-21 Ferncliff Ave.

The granting of the latter license had been appealed by abutters on Ferncliff Avenue and adjacent areas of Main Street on grounds that propane storage posed a fire and explosion hazard. There had been a leak from a company propane tank truck Sept. 11, 1990, which prompted Driscoll at the time to evacuate the street until the leak was contained.

O'Keefe conducted a hearing on the appeal at the Senior Center on Jan. 31 and had said he expected to announce a decision no later than March 1.

But time dragged on, and nearly everyone forgot about it as other issues came to the fore. Among these were the raising of cable television rates in Lee and three other towns, generating a furor among subscribers; town caucuses and the creation of contests for offices at the annual election in May; and a protracted budget-setting exercise that ended with a proposal to override tax-limiting Proposition 2½, a proposal that eventually was smashed at the ballot box.

Meanwhile, O'Keefe had contracted pneumonia and was out of work for a period of time in the early spring.

Now that he has upheld the license for the Maple Street terminal, Lee Oil will presumably be able to park its propane truck there, something that Miller has wanted to do since last winter. He said at the time that the truck is a new one with automatically closing valves and other safeguards and would not be a hazard.

The truck that leaked on Ferncliff Avenue was not the same truck, he said.

Still needs permit

The storage license for Maple Street was issued by the Selectmen on Jan. 7. It is up to the fire chief to issue the permit, a different document, that will spell out safety measures that must be undertaken before the license can be exercised.

O'Keefe said in his letter of approval that better illumination of the property is necessary.

And company owner Miller last winter told Maple Street neighbors he would dike the site and take other steps to allay their concerns about propane storage.

As for the Ferncliff Avenue facility, Miller last winter said he no longer stored the fuel there because he could not do so while the appeal was pending.

Both storage licenses were granted on split votes after hearings that once or twice became quite heated.

In another action, the Selectmen agreed to write to the state Department of Environmental Protection registering concern about the impact on Lee of the proposed DeLillo landfill in the town of Hinsdale.

Selectman Joseph F. Dupont said he would like to see the statement of concern limited to Lee. Although the landfill could be presumed to have an effect on the entire county, this broader impact was something he felt he could not assess as a layman.

Chairman Diane P. Roosa said she believed the town "has a lot to lose with all the trucks coming through."

Lee residents urged to attend special meeting

LEE — Edward M. Briggs, who is chairman of the Lee Democratic Town Committee and an elected assessor, says he is urging voters to attend Thursday night's special town meeting because "their right to choose" is threatened under one of the articles on the warrant.

He referred to the article that proposes amending the special act establishing a selectmen-administrator form of government. The amendment, if approved, would make the assessors', clerk's, treasurer's and collector's posts appointive rather than elective as they are now.

"It's taking people's right to choose away from them," said Briggs. He said he would still feel the same way even if he was not an assessor. "I myself am against changing the ballot," he said.

Advocate 9-25-91 Lee to vote on how officials are chosen

By Gina Gold

At the special town meeting in Lee this Thursday evening, town representatives will vote on two major issues: balancing the town's \$8.2 million budget and deciding whether to give the new town administrator power of appointment over five local offices.

The 7:30 p.m. meeting will be held in the auditorium of the Lee Central School.

The issue of the administrator's power of appointment has incited heated debate because it would take direct choice of many government officials out of voters' hands.

Article 16 proposes that the town administrator be given authority to appoint the town clerk, town treasurer, town collector and members of the boards of health and assessors.

These offices are currently elected positions, according to the state act that structures the administrator-selectmen form of government. Even if the article is passed, the offices of moderator, selectmen, school committee, housing authority, constables, planning board and the community development corporation would remain elected posts.

Town clerk and treasurer Patricia D. Carlino, whose own job would be affected, opposes the change. She asserts that elected officials are more accountable to the people. "I'm a long-time proponent of elections," she says. "The more responsibility you take away from the people the less they get involved."

However Selectman Martin Deely believes the changes would be positive. "Giving one person responsibility is cleaner, more efficient and more productive," he says. "It's time that we coordinated the entire budgeting process."

Article 16 has another part which would allow the selectmen, by unanimous vote, to waive the educational background requirements for the administrator's position if a candidate has 10 years of municipal administrative experience. This change would open up the job to local officials who lack the educational requirements.

Those who support the waiver contend that a candidate with local, hands-on experience may be as competent as someone with a formal degree. Opponents, on the other hand, argue that the administrator's \$45,000 salary should go to a professional who has a more far-reaching grasp of town administration than most local officials.

Lee voters instituted the town administrator form of government at the May 13 annual town elections. An administrator is expected to be in place by January, after the interviewing process is complete.

Vote on cuts

In May, voters also voted to block an override of the tax limiting Proposition 2 1/2. Representatives at Thursday's special town meeting will be asked to vote on the \$238,000 in cuts that were made as a result. Carlino and Deely predict that the majority of budget cuts and transfers on the warrant will pass smoothly.

One item that may stir more confusion than controversy is an \$85,000 reduction in the insurance budget. This money, Carlino explains, will not be lost but replaced by a \$140,000 surplus from last year's insurance fund.

At the start of the meeting, Finance Committee Chairman John DeVarennes will make a presentation to clarify this issue and the entire budget picture.

The only other items that might raise eyebrows, says Carlino, are the elimination of the \$300 Christmas light fund and an amendment to the town bylaws that would eliminate mandatory delivery of annual Town Reports to each home, a service which costs the taxpayers \$3,000 annually.

Thursday night's meeting will actually be two meetings in one. The first session, which begins at 7:30, runs 15 minutes and will wrap up four items left over from fiscal '91. The second half, to address the new articles, begins at 7:45.

Lee ready to send trash to Vicon starting Dec. 1

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Selectmen agreed Monday night that they will sign a memorandum of agreement next week with Vicon Recovery Associates in Pittsfield to begin incinerating Lee's domestic trash and garbage, starting Dec. 1.

J. Peter Scolforo, Lee's superintendent of public works, said the Dec. 1 date should provide householders and trash haulers reasonable time to arrange for collections, because commercial haulers will now pick up all domestic refuse in town, not just some of it.

Lee's landfill on Woodland Road is filling up and the town's Board of Public Works and Board of Health contend that incineration by Vicon will, in the long run, be more economical than to open a new landfill. Under current environmental rules and regulations, new landfills must be excavated, their bottoms sealed with composition liners and outfitted with leachate collection systems and other safeguards.

The cost of opening one of these in Lee has been estimated by engineering consultants at between \$10 million and \$20 million.

Commercial haulers

Once delivery to Vicon begins, Lee householders who have been in the habit of buying landfill stickers and taking their trash to the Woodland Road landfill won't be able to do that anymore. Vicon, whose furnaces burn rubbish from Pittsfield and seven other communities and convert it to steam heat for the nearby Crane & Co. factory buildings, will only accept delivery by the commercial truckers.

In Lee's case, up to four such haulers will be accepted by Vicon, but the expectation, according to Vicon general manager Llewellyn E. Clark, is that the two haulers that now pick up household rubbish in Lee, Daley & Sons of Lee and Lenox Trucking Co. of Lenox, will remain the principal truckers.

The agreement will permit up to four, Clark said, so that trash hauling will remain competitive.

No one could predict Monday what the cost will be for trash pickup, but Scolforo observed that when Lenox began sending its rubbish to Vicon, the average turned out to be \$20 a month. This entails pickup and transportation of up to four bags of trash a week, plus recyclables, he said.

In Lee, Daley and Lenox Trucking also pick up recyclable waste and will probably continue to do so, Scolforo said.

Under the agreement, whoever the trash haulers are will pay Vicon the standard tipping fee, which at the moment is \$70 a ton. For a rule of thumb, the average household produces 50 pounds of solid waste a week, or one-fortieth of a ton, said Clark. Based on the current tipping fee, the cost would be \$1.75 a week, or \$7 a month, for disposal alone. The costs of pickup, hauling, related expenses and profit would be added to this.

Scolforo and Clark said the Lee-Vicon agreement has been cleared by Pittsfield's public utilities commissioner, William L. Forestell. Under the prime contract between Pittsfield and Vicon, Pittsfield must approve such agreements, partly to ensure that Vicon's primary responsibility, to dispose of Pittsfield rubbish first, is not impaired.

Clark said there will be discussion with Lee haulers on appropriate routes to use to get to the Vicon plant on Hubbard Avenue. Lee's rubbish is estimated at 3,000 tons a year.

Clark said Vicon tries to burn 75,000 to 78,000 tons a year. Pittsfield, which three years ago, supplied more than 60,000 of those tons, is now down to below 50,000 tons a year, he said. So, the Lee entry is well timed, he said.

He said trash tonnage is declining as a result of recycling and the depressed economy.

Eighth community

Lee will be the eighth community delivering trash to Vicon.

Although a number of details, including the signing of the agreement, remain in the future, the general prediction is clear, said Scolforo; namely, that the town will have to:

► Close its present landfill next summer, starting the work on or about July 1. Under new state Department of Environmental Protection regulations governing

landfills, towns that continue to use their existing landfills beyond July 1 must apply for new permits, and the costs of these can be as much as \$10,000 apiece. In any event, after Dec. 31, 1993, communities that want to continue to dispose of rubbish in their own landfills must construct new landfills with liners, leachate collection and the rest.

► Obtain an engineering plan for the closing of the landfill in the next few months to meet DEP requirements. There is some money remaining in one of the town funds that may be used for this, said Scolforo, but the actual closing costs will undoubtedly require a town meeting appropriation. To give Selectmen an idea of what this cost may be, he said landfill closings in other parts of the state have cost upward of \$80,000 an acre.

"We have 10 to 12 acres," he observed.

► Some town rubbish next spring, perhaps during April, May and June, will have to be deposited again in the Woodland Road landfill to fill remaining cavities and enable the Public Works Department to grade the landfill and cap it.

Buy 24 acres

Part of Monday night's discussion concerned whether the town should purchase an additional 24 acres next to its landfill for future landfill space. John Piacquadio, speaking for the Board of Public Works, said the board believes firmly the purchase should be made.

The 1990 town meeting approved \$1.065 million for acquisition of the land, with \$355,000 of that amount to come from Mead Corp., which would buy 8 of the acres for its own landfill for paper-mill sludge. The idea at the time was for the town to use the remaining 16 acres or so for a new landfill.

Lee votes to Advocate close town dump 9-25-91

The town of Lee is out of the dump business, Department of Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo told the selectmen. As of Dec. 1 the town's filled-to-capacity dump will be closed. Only recycling services will continue.

Lee residents will be sending their refuse to Vicon Resources Recovery in Pittsfield, pending approval from the city in November. "This is going to be costly for everyone," says Scolforo, who predicts the average household will spend \$20 a month in private hauling fees.

Scolforo says the next step is to level and cap the 12-acre landfill, a process that is projected to cost \$40,000 for planning and \$80,000 an acre to complete. In early spring, the dump will re-open briefly to accept industrial waste. This will level off the landfill in accordance with state Department of Environmental Protection regulations.

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — It is the 14th single-family house constructed by Lee and other South Berkshire high school students in the past 18 years, and although it has been completed during a severely depressed real estate market, instructor John Reilley believes it will not stand empty long.

The advertised asking price, \$153,000, is modest, he said, for a house of its size. It is of Cape Cod style, with 2,000 square feet on two floors that embrace four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room and a large — 28 by 14 feet — kitchen-family room with a brick fireplace. There is also a two-car garage.

The student builders not only did the framing and finish carpentry but built the chimney and fireplace, installed windows and doors and painted the entire house. Electronics students from Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington installed wiring and electrical fixtures under the eye of their instructor and a licensed electrician. Private contractors were hired to install the foundations and plumbing and hot-water-heating systems.

Open house Saturday

Residents of Lee and other South Berkshire towns will be able to see the final result Saturday from noon to 3 when the students, along with Reilley, will be present to answer questions and give guided tours at an open house. James D. Gralla, the Lee school system's director of occupational education, will stop by.

Also present will be representatives from the Lee Kiwanis Club, which has been sponsoring these projects for nine years and has bought a building lot for next year in expectation of sponsoring No. 10.

"It's strictly a community service," said Elaine Zanelli, Kiwanis' president-designate for the coming year. "Hopefully, each project will make enough money so we can buy a lot for the following year, but if we make no money, fine. What we're interested in is the kids' skills. And from what I've seen, I'm really impressed with what they do."

The new house is on a street called Via Maria in a subdivision off Fairview Street south of the Massachusetts Turnpike. Like its predecessors, it served, in Reilley's phrase, "as if it was a real job site." Once the house was closed in last fall, it became the carpentry shop where students did the millwork that was necessary for the job, assembled cabinets, window units and the like and stored their tools.

There have been 27 students in the program, 18 from Lee, four from Lenox, three from Monument Mountain and two from Mount Everett Regional School in Sheffield. Half worked in the morning and half in the afternoon, attending academic classes the other half of each day at their home schools.

Departure from tradition

Reilley said this is a departure from traditional vocational scheduling in which students work one week at their trades and spend alternate weeks in classrooms studying vocationally "related" subjects.

It is an outdated system, Reilley believes. The half-day scheduling allows carpentry students, for example, to enroll in a variety of academic courses that would not be possible otherwise, he said, and helps prevent divisions between vocational and non-vocational students.

Many of the students go directly from the house-building projects into summer jobs or, if they have graduated, into full-time jobs with area contractors, Reilley and Gralla said.

The seniors each spring compete with each other in a three-hour contest at Lee High School that tests their skills in rough carpentry, detail carpentry and mathematics. This year, Rick Puleri of Lee won the competition and was designated the year's outstanding carpenter. Rodney Loring of Otis won the most-improved designation. The competitions are modeled on tests that professional carpenters must pass to become certified instructors.

Although Reilley says the house-building projects are run on the order of regular job sites, there are still differences. As junior Nick Gilmore of Lee phrased it, "Here, you can have a bad day once in a while. On a [commercial] job, you'd really get reamed."

Several of the advantages, disadvantages and obstacles in creating a regional ambulance service reflect many of the problems any effort to regionalize services will face.

"It's worthwhile to investigate because there could be some advantages," LaBier says of the proposal to regionalize ambulance services. "To us there would be an advantage because it would mean more manpower and resources available. But there are a lot of problems that would have to be worked out beforehand."

Logistically, in Lee and Lenox the town-ambulance services are town departments that act under the umbrella of town insurance and other support services. A new organization would have to be created to organize a regional ambulance.

LaBier adds that a central location would have to be found for an ambulance and that costs of labor may increase. The workload of a regional service would be much greater than a single-town ambulance, he says, and some full-time paid help would have to be found. In Lee and Lenox, the town ambulances are run on a strictly volunteer basis. "Chances are with a regional ambulance we'll need two full-time people," he says.

In many cases LaBier says town departments may be reluctant to disrupt their own organizations.

"I'm going on 22 years (working on the Lee Ambulance) and I've seen it build up to what it is today," LaBier says. "There are some personal feelings involved. We've all gotten along for years; I wouldn't want to disrupt what we've already got."

Local ambulance services are already expanding their services to other towns and improving the collaborative efforts, LaBier adds.

Lee Ambulance services Tyringham, Stockbridge and 20 miles of the Massachusetts Turnpike in addition to often backing up ambulances in other towns. Although Lenox Selectmen's Chairman Joseph H. Nolan has expressed reservations about a regional ambulance being unable to serve emergency cases fast enough, LaBier says first responders, such as police, usually arrive at an emergency scene before an ambulance to do emergency work.

Four volunteer firemen in Stockbridge are being trained as emergency medical technicians to act as first responders for Lee Ambulance, LaBier says.

"There could be a lot of advantages to regionalizing, but a lot of it is already being done," LaBier says. "It could be more cost effective in the long run, but it would have to be investigated. You don't just get up and do it."

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